AN EXCELLENT TREATISE OF CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOVSNES, WRITTEN FIRST in the French tongue by M. I. de l'Eſpine, & tranſlated into English by I. Field, for the comfort of afflicted conſciences, very neceſſarie & profitable to be read of all Chriſtians, as vvell for eſtabliſhing them in the true doctrine of Iuſtification, as alſo for enabling them to confute the falſe doctrine of all Papiſtes and Heretickes in that poinct.

Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautrollier dwelling in the Blackfriers.
1580.

To the Reader.

Loe here the ioy of Chriſtians all,
laid vp within this booke:
To teach the way that leades to life,
whereon ech man may looke,
It is not we, but it is he,
that freely giueth life:
That none but he, may praiſed be,
without gaine ſay or ſtrife.

TO THE VERTVOVS AND MY VERY DEARE FREND THE LADYE LIZABETH

Terwhit *I. F.* wiſheth encreaſe of godlineſſe, and conſtancy in the true religion of Chriſt to the ende and in the ende.

RIght vvorshipfull, and my very good Lady, after I had peruſed this litle treatiſe of Chriſtian righteouſnes, as it vvas firſt vvritten in the Frenche tongue, I tooke great cõfort in it, & thought it to be very neceſſarie, to be turned into Engliſhe for the benefite of Chriſtes poore Church. I therefore as occaſion ſerued at conuenient times, performed that I purpoſed vvherein I haue ſtudied to be as ſimple and plaine (becauſe of the vnlearned) as poſſibly the matter & phraſe of that tongue vvould ſuffer me. I am not ignorant vvhat an hard thinge it is to tranſlate vvell, and contrary vviſe, hovv eaſie a thing it is for euery carping Momus, or ignorant Zoilus to

finde fault: but herein I ſhall as God ſhal aſſiſt me, arme my ſelfe vvith patiẽce to beare vvhatſoeuer hath ben, is, or ſhalbe layd vpon me. This only ſhall cõfort me, that I vvalke not before men, but before God: in vvhoſe preſence I proteſt, that according to the ſimple knovvledge he hath giuen me, I haue dealt ſimplie, and ſincerely. Of all vanities I eſteeme it the greateſt, to hang vppon the blaſtes of mens mouthes. They that are that vvaye caried higheſt, and haue not the teſtimony of good conſciences, neither ſeeke to approue them ſelues to God, to vvhom they muſt ſtand or fall, they ſhall finde no comfort in it, in the day of death. It litle auaileth a man to be iuſtified of the vvhole vvorld, and to be condemned before God. Therefore God giue vs grace to vvalke as in his preſence, that vvhatſoeuer vve take in hande, it may be conſecrated to him, & haue an excellent bleſſing vpon it. I haue dedicated my labours herein, to your good Ladyſhippe for ſundry cauſes, though I deny not, but my meaning is to make them common to the church of God: firſt that they may be a teſtimonie to

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all posterity of your forvvardnes, fidelity & sinceritie in the religion of Christ Iesus: Then, of my bounden dutie and good vvill tovvardes you. And I most humbly beseeche you in the eyes and sight of the vvhole vvorlde, that you constantly and inuiolablie holde and keepe that blessed hope of your best inheritance. And as God in mercy hath dravven you out of the sinke and mier of Poperie, and of the false vvorshippe of God (vvherto, as to all other vices vve are most apt by nature) to the true religion of Christ, so goe forvvards, and most humbly and continually thanke him for it. Acknovvledge it the greatest benefit that euer in mercy he coulde haue bestovved vppon you. Eevvare of the vvorld, that maketh least accompt of this most excellent, and vvaightie thinge. Study by all meanes to answvere this holy & excellent calling, that your religion maye shine as vvell in vvorkes as in vvordes, in an holy conuersation as in a sincere profes-sio. Knovv assuredly that vvhere the truth of God raigneth, there the kingdome of Sathan decaieth, the strength of sinne abateth,

the pleasures of the flesh are restrained, and Iesus Christ by the scepter of his holy vvord & blessed spirit, continualy vvorketh, to the dayely mortifying of the outvvard man, and quickening the invvard, to the brideling & maistering of the affections of the mind: till it be renued, reformed & chaũged into his holy obedience, and so by litle and litle be translated into his kingdome. And till this be brought to passe, you shall neuer feele vvhat Christes righteousnes is (vvhich is our onely happines) vvherof this booke so notably & comfortably entreateth. The Lorde Iesus open your harte, and geue you vnderstanding in all his misteries, that you may see his great glorie, till you maye comprehend vvith all Saincts the height, depth, vvidth and length of his glorious righteousnes, laying hold vppon it through a liuely faith, and so be sealed vp through him (as I doubt not but you ar) to euerlasting happines. Fare you vvell most humbly from my poore house in Grubstreate this second of Nouember. 1577

Your good Ladiships bounden
in the Lorde. *I.F.*

AN

AN EXCELLENT TREATISE, OF CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOVSNES,

Made by M.I.de l'Eſpine Miniſter of the vvorde of God,& nevvly put forth for th' inſtruction and conſolation of the children of God

THERE is not any one article in all our Chriſtian Faith, the knowledge whereof can be ſo healthfull and neceſſarie vnto vs, as this of Chriſtian Righteouſneſſe. But foraſmuch as vppon this righteouſneſſe depends euerlaſting life, and this righteouſnes vppon Fayth, and of Fayth commeth that knowledge which we haue of the promiſes of our God, and of Jeſus Chriſt, who is the only meane, that they are applied, and freely accompliſhed towardes vs, without hauing any reſpect to any of our woꝛks: It behoueth for the better vnderſtanding of all theſe things aright, that we laye them foorth in oꝛder, and begin with the definition of Chriſtian

Abac.2.4. Rom.1.17. Rom.3.24. & 15. 2.Cor.1.28.

righteousnesse. But it must be noted that in the holy Scripture the signification and vse of this worde (Righteousnesse) is farre different from that which is vsed in the bookes of the Philosophers and schoolemen: because they take righteousnesse, for a certaine habite and qualitie, which being shutte vp in our soule, encli-neth vs to liue honestly, and in such sorte to order the course of all our actions, that they be fully framed to reason, and to those rules that are sette foorth vnto vs in the Lawe: A thing that we can not doe perfectly, seeing that we are loaden and compased about with so great infirmitie, and for that our nature being so diseased and corrupted, it pricketh vs, and wholly turneth vs, from the loue, studie and exercise of that which is good: and contrariwise dispo-seth and prouoketh vs to imbrace and followe vice, with a marualous will and readinesse. Besides, we are driuen and ledde in this case by many tentations and assaultes, where-with the flesh, the worlde and deuill doe continually assaile vs. Wherefore we must conclude, that in the whole worlde, there can neuer be founde a righteous man if righteous-nesse be to be measured according to that de-finition, which the Philosophers haue giuen and that it be established, in a perfection of

The definition of the righteousnesse of the Philosophers and schoolemen

vertue,

vertue, which we must more loue, esteeme and honour, then any other good, and applie our whole spirite, and all our vnderstanding to attayne to it, and possesse it: without thinking at any tyme that this is any meane to make us to be accompted righteous before GOD, in whose presence and iudgement all our workes shall euer be founde imperfect & dammable, if they be examined according to the rigour of his righteousnes. *Iob.4.18, and 9.3. & 25.4.*

To vnderstande then what this Christian righteousnes is, and in what it consisteth, it is meete to note, that Righteousnes and iudgement are correlatiues, and for the better vnderstanding of the one, it must be referred to the other. The which thing may easely be obserued in many places of the newe Testament, where righteousnesse is referred to iustification, and iustification to righteousnesse. In such sorte, that comparing these places one with an other, a man shall finde that righteousnesse is no other thing but the meane whereby we are iustified before the iudgement seate of God. And that iustification is nothing else but a release of our sinnes which we obteine there through the fauour, and in beholding the merite of Jesus Christ, which there is imputed vnto vs. *Rom.3.4.5.*

What righteousnes is.

What iustificatiō is.

Many kindes of iudgements

But heare is to be noted, that there are many kinds of iudgements differing one from the other, that is to wit, there is the iudgement of God: the iudgement of the law, the iudgement of men, & of our owne conscience: and we must know whether our owne righteousnes be sufficient to satisfie & answere to euery one of these iudgements, and whether the same in any of these, can stande vs in steede to obtayne an acquitement and deliuerance of the accusations that are propounded by our enimies there against vs.

The iudgement of God.

Concerning Gods iudgement which is the first of the foure, we must answere that it is impossible ther, that we can defend vs, if we haue no other thing to bring foorth and alleage but our own innocēcie: forasmuch as our thoughts, our affections, our wordes, our actions, and generally our whole life and nature being examined it shal be founde that in man is nothing els but vanitie, and to be short the very matter of death and damnation, for howe can an euill tree bring forth any good fruicte? and howe can rotten and wormeaten seede, engender any thing, but like it selfe? In like maner how can a man from a poysoned and infected vessell drawe one drop of good wine? let vs conclude then, that we neither doe, nor can doe any thing, that may be

Psal. 39. 6. 12.

Psal. 51. 7. & 62. 10.

Similitudes shewing the corruption of man, and his vnabilitie to doe good.

be able to abide that rigorous examination of the iustice of God, and that in vs and in our whole life there is nothing that can there warrant and deliuer vs but his mercie alone. Because we are as the Prophet saith, a wildernes altogether ouergrowen with bushes, brãbles, and bryers, which are good for nothing, but to be burnt, & a very dunghill of corruptiõ where there is nothing (as S. Augustine sayth) but euen the very sincke and aboundance of miserie and filthines. *Osee.2.3.* *In his boke of confessions. 2.chap. 10.*

The beginning then of our righteousnes is, that we accuse and condemne our selues, and that we cõfesse before God that (which he knoweth well enough) to wit that we are nothing but dust and corruption. *The beginning of our righteousnes is to know our vnrighteousnes*

The prodigall child withdrawing him selfe farre frõ his fathers house, neuer thought that he could returne thither or attaine to righteousnes & vertue, from which he was fallen, but by the knowledge and feeling which he had of his faultes, and the sure perswasion which he had conceaued to confesse them. *The example of the prodigall childe Luc. 15.18.*

The Publican comming to the Temple loaden and couered with vice and sinne, had remembrance of his vice and wretchednes, which he with great griefe and deepe gronings confessed: whereuppon it came to passe that he re- *The second example of the Publican, Luc.18. 13.14.*

turned righteous into his owne house.

3. Example of Dauid and of Peter.
2.Sa.12.13
Luc.22.62.

After Dauid & holy Peter were turned away from God, through a greate vnkindnes & forgetfulnes, as well from him, as from those graces, which they had receaued of his large liberalitie, had they any other meane to be reconciled vnto him, but by the acknowledgement and cõfession of their sinnes? wherupon we must cõclude, that by this we must approch before god. And that there is nothing that doth more allure and knit vs to him, then a penitent hart which (as S. Augustine saith) feeleth and continually bewayleth his sinnes and imperfections.

The acknowledgement of our miseries is the foũdation of our religion.

This humilitie is not onely the foundation of our righteousnesse (as Iohn Chrisostome sayth) but also of all our religion, the which decayeth as soone as we begin to conceaue any opinion of our selues or of our owne vertues. He (sayth S. augustine) will not be any longer of the body, that refuseth to be humble, & to make himselfe litle with his head: for ordinarily as the valleyes are more aboundaunt and bring foorth more fruite then doe the mountaines, by reason that being more low, they receaue more commodiously all the dew and fatnes which falleth and descendeth from the hie hilles: euen so it behoueth that we be more low and humble in our owne eyes, if we will, that God replenish vs

A similitude shewing the good that commeth of humilitie.
1.Sa.15.17

vs with his graces: the which maye finde no place in vs, if we presume any whit of our vertues. Which thing Iesus Christ sayth to those Scribes and Pharises, whome he sawe arrogant and presumptuous, and puffed vp with a vaine & false opinion, that they had conceaued of their owne righteousnesse: you iustifie your selues before men, saith he vnto them: but God knoweth your hartes within, before whome, they oftentimes are most abhominable, that are in greatest credit and reputation in the world. *Luc. 16. 15.*

Wherefore when there is any question concerning righteousnes, we must diligently take heede that we be not like those that are sicke of the dropsie, who by reason of the grossenesse of their bodies, seeme to be in good estate: notwithstanding they be full of nothing but water and such euil humors, which in the end are the cause of their death. *Pride is quite contrary to our health. A similitude.*

Let not thē that outward appearance which we may haue of any vertue, beguile & deceaue vs, because that all the vertue, that we can prouide for our selues, can no more endure before God, then waxe before the fire. And as there needeth no more but one pinne or pricke to pearce a bladder, & to make all the wind therin inclosed, incontinently co come forth: euen so there needeth no more, but one very litle tenta- *A similitude, shewing that all the perfection that men in any wise may haue, is nothing els but imperfection before God.*

tion to pull the bizarde from hypocrites, and to discouer them to euery man, who shall know, after that they shalbe sifted, that there was nothinge but a coulour and an imagination of all the reputation of righteousnes & vertue, which they had gotten amongst men.

Let vs not make then any accompte of all the righteousnes which can be in vs, nor let vs not bring it to the iudgemēt of our God, to better our cause, or to winne there by lawe any thing for vs. Forasmuch as there was neuer any other cause of the ruine of the Iewes, nor any thing that ouerthrewe them, & made them frustrate of the hope they had to attaine to the righteousnesse which they pretended, but the onely presumptuous opinion they had conceaued to be able to appeare there, through their owne righteousnes,

Rom.10.3.

Nowe to the ende we fall not headlong into the like daunger and inconuenience, let vs acknowledge and feele in our selues, that we are not able to thinke one onely good thought, but let vs be resolued in this, that all our abilitie is from the alone grace and bountie of our God

2.Cor.3.5.

For all our glory (as S. Paule sayth) is excluded, and we haue not any thing in our selues, whereof we may boast our selues.

Rom.3.27. and.5.2.

For beinge naturally headde in sinne as we

we are, can we haue any good motion or feeling? But it is certaine that before our regeneration, and before we be called through the grace of God to the knowledge of him: we are blinde and can not see any whitte of the misteries and secretes of God. Moreouer, we are deaffe and can not heare his voyce: we are sicke of the palsey and impotent, and not able to walke in his wayes: we haue an hart of stone, which bringeth foorth no good affection: and a mouth full of bitternes and cursing, and we are as an open graue, from whence commeth nothing but stinche and corruption: to conclude, we are altogether dead, depriued of all good, in such sort, that we haue not any good vse of our reason. Let no man flatter him selfe (sayeth S. Augustine) forasmuch as we are nothing of our selues but deuills & Sathans: that is to saye, of our owne nature, we are enemies of God, of his honour, of his lawe, and of all vertue: and there is not any other difference betwixt vs and Deuills, but the onely pitie, which God hath vnto vs, & the gracious fauour which it pleased him to shewe vnto vs. And although God hath accepted of vs, and that being receaued into his couenaunt, we are cõsecrated vnto him to be his temple: notwithstanding all these great & incomprehensible fauours which

Arguments to proue the corruption & vnrighteousnes of man before God.

1. Cor. 2. 14.

Deut. 14. 4.

Ezec. 11. 12. 19. & 36. 26.

Rom. 3. 13.

Augustine vpon Iohn

he hath shewed vs, we ought not vtterly to abolish the remembrance which we ought alwaies to haue of our horrible corruption. The Scripture to the ende to beate downe our presumption, and to keepe vs mindefull of the corruption
Iosue.40.6. of our nature, putteth vs cõtinually in remembraunce, that we and all flesshe are nothing but grasse, wormes meate, dust, and filth, as Dauid
Psal.103.14. sayth that GOD knoweth vs, and whereof we are made: and that to be briefe, we are nothing but dust and putrefaction: yea that the
Psa.62.10 greatest and goodliest of the whole world with all their commoditie and beautie, which men so much esteeme, are nothing but vanitie: and that if they were put into the ballaunce to be wayed with nothing, nothing would be found heauier then they. Being then so noted in the Scripture, yea when we are so adorned and enriched with the great and precious giftes of our God: in what estimation shall we haue righteousnes and vertues whereof we thinke to haue so great plentie?

A similitude to shew the hypocrisie and misery of man.

We do as marchaunts, who alwaies praise and esteeme their wares & marchaundise more then they are worth: euen so doe we of our vertues: but when they are examined and prised by those which know them, as by the spirit of God and his Prophets, they are altogether iudged,

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as old ragges, torne, tyed together & patched vp againe: and as old images new gilded ouer, which outwardly hath some glistering & shew, but within are nothing but dust and durt: or, as counterfaite money, which is of ill mettal how goodly a print soeuer it haue. All our righteousnesses saith Esay are as olde ragges, foule and lothsome to see. S. Paule albeit he walked in the lawe, without rebuke, and that he felt him selfe not culpable in any thing in his conscience nor willingly to haue transgressed: yet notwithstanding he esteemeth his righteousnesse as dongue. Daniel praying vnto God, alleageth not his owne righteousnes & vertues, neither the righteousnes and vertues of his cõpagnions, to the end to cause God to encline, & to heare his prayers. Nowe (saith he) that we are before thy face, we can set nothing before thee, nor propounde any thing on our part but shame and confusion. Cursed (saith Augustine) be all our righteousnesses, if they be iudged without the mercie of God. And Tertullian: All the good that we doe (sayth he) and all the righteousnesse & vertue which is in vs, is nothinge but shame and reproche.

Testimonies of the Scriptures, & Fathers to proue the vnrighteousnes of man before God.

Philip. 3.8

Dan. 9. 5.

Augustine.

Tertullian.

When they spake these thinges, it was not without great reason, because there is no righteousnes and vertue in vs, which is not defiled

and polluted with great vices. Also, there is not any faith, which is not mingled with an infinite number of doubtes, errours & fonde imaginations: nor likewise, any godlines which is not contaminate with innumerable scruples & superstitions. To conclude: all our wine (as Esay sayeth) is mingled with water, and all our corne is full of darnel and durt.

Esay.1.22.

These similitudes and other following, shewe the beastly pride of them, that thinke to haue in themselues wherewithall to stand before God

Nowe if a man woulde boast of his strength and healthy, and yet were subiect to a thousande diseases: or of his knowledge, and yet were ignorant of all good learning: or of his riches, & yet were indebted & endaungered to the whole worlde: woulde not euery one mocke him as an idiote and a foole? euen so we aswell shewe our ignorance, and what slender vnderstāding we haue, when wee will attribute any righteousnes to our selues, and boast our selues in it, be it neuer so litle.

Iere.9.23.

He that is strong (sayth Ieremie) let him not boaste and presume of his strength, nor he that is wise of his wisdome, nor he that is riche of his riches, because that, if we consider what we haue on the one side, we must marke what wee lacke on the other. And when all shalbe well caste, it shall bee founde that the expence will farre surmounte the receipt, and the debtes are much greater, then the reuenue. Moreouer,

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all that is greatest vnder the Sunne, and that which men most wonder at and worship in the worlde, is nothing else (as Solomon sayeth) but vanitie. Is there any thing so stable and durable, which is not mutable, transitorie, and vncertaine? what madnes then is it to make so great a matter and so highly to esteeme of our selues, for thinges of so small valewe? we are oftentimes like to those that dreame and wake againe, who when they are a sleepe thinke to haue founde some great treasure, and haue a great ioye in it: but after their wakening, they see that all is vanished like smoke, whereupon they vexe & grieue themselues. Likewise when wee thinke that wee are righteous, this is a dreame, which passeth through our spirits and vanisheth assoone as we are awake and are deliuered from the darkenes of ignorance, wherein we were a sleepe and buryed. S. Paule whilest he was ignorant, without a true and right knowledge of ỳ lawe, thought to be righteous, and felt not sinne any whitte raigning in him, vntill that God by his grace, had illuminated him, & made his will by the lawe knowen vnto him, & so consequẽtly the lustes, & corruption ỳ was in his nature. The which made him soone enough to forgoe the opinion which he had cõceaued of his owne righteousnes and vertues.

Eccle.4.2. and 1.1.

A similitude.

An example in Paul before his conuersion.

Another similitude.

After that we haue well swept our chambers, it seemeth vnto vs ỳ they are very cleane: And yet notwithstanding, when the sunne commeth, to enter there by the windowes, we perceaue streightwaies by the beames an infinite deale of dust, which ỳ Philosophers cal motes: euen so oftentimes before we be wel instructed in ỳ law of God, if we be exempted from grosse & palpable sinnes, such as are murthers, whordomes, thefts, we glorie that we are perfect and innocent. But when our consciences come to be discried by the word of God, & that Iesus Christ who is ỳ light hath entred there by his spirite: then he maketh vs to see by his beames an infinite number of faultes & imperfections, which are hidden in our heartes, as are the serpẽts in their holes. Saint Paule sayth that he neuer vnderstoode, that concupiscence was a vice, vntil he had seene in the lawe, that it was there forbidden. Yea, but hadde he not learned this in the schoole of Gamaliel, before his conuersion? I graunt, as concerning the outward barke and superficially. But he had not attained yet to the bottome, the which wee can not doe, vntill we haue bene in the schoole of Iesus Christ, who in the lawe will make vs truely to knowe both God and our selues, euen as the sunne shining by his brightnes maketh vs to se

Rom 7.7.

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it selfe, and all thinges with it.

In the night by reason of the darkenesse spread vppon the earth: all thinges are hidde and couered: which causeth that we can not discerne and discouer the spottes which we haue in our faces: But when the light beginneth to appeare, and that we take a glasse, to behold our selues therein: then they are discouered and shewe them selues: euen so likewise during the time that we are couered with the darknesse of ignorance, the vices that dwell in vs, are hidden there, and oftentimes we thinke, being leprous and deformed, that we are beawtifull and perfect: but our eyes being open, and illuminate by the spirit and grace of our God, and taking the glasse of the lawe, therein to behold the estate of our nature and our life: then wee begin to knowe the great and grieuous imperfections that are in vs: and we at once loose the opinion which we had conceaued before, of our owne righteousnes and vertues. *Another similitude.*

We are oftentimes like vnto drunkardes who being ouercharged with wine and meate, haue no maner of knowledge or feeling of the case wherein they are, nor of any thing else, and yet hauing their face couered, and all to berayed with durt, they canne not perceaue it vntill that their wine be drenched, and their *Another similitude.*

braine deliuered from those fumes and vapours whereby they were so letted, and darkened. Wee lykewyse, before we be regenerate, are in suche sorte besotted with a loue that we beare to our selues, and with a vayne opinion that wee haue conceaued of our selues, that we know not the filthinesse and villanies wherewith we are beraped. But when the light of the spirite and word of God beginnes to breake forth vnto vs we come by litle and litle to breake and scatter those cloudes, which were before our senses. and recouering the viewe of our reason, we beginne to awake our selues, and discouer the pitifull and miserable estate wherein we are. And looke as this knowledge groweth and increaseth in vs, so much the more it augmenteth and encreaseth the knowledge of our vices and imperfections. As wee may see by experience in the fathers, who though they were notable and excellent personages, and marked with all notable vertues: yet notwithstanding they made no accompt of them: but contrariwise they confessed that they were the greatest sinners in the worlde, as a man may see by those goodly confessiones which the scripture mentioneth, to haue ben made of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Dauid, Jeremie, Daniell, S. Paule, S. John and generally of the whole Church: by which

The Patriarches, Prophetes and Apostles in whom they sought their righteousnes.

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we woulde iudge them to haue bene the moste wicked men, which were vpon the earth, if we knew not the humilitie, that was in them, and in what contempt they hadde them selues and their workes, for the greate knowledge they had of the law of God: the which engendred in them an other thing, to witte, the knowledge of the imperfection which was in them and in their lyfe, when they came to measure it according to the rule of ỹ law, and brought all their thoughtes, desires, wordes and actions, to be tryed by the will and ordinaunce of God,

Wee say in a common prouerbe, that such a one as thinketh him selfe in best health, carieth death in his bosome. Which must not onely be vnderstode of the bodely health, but also of the health of the soule. For the diseases of the body are nothinge so daungerous, as those of the soule: because that verie many (albeit theire hartes are full of distrustes, doubtinges, errors false opinions, ingratitudes, enuies, reuengements, darkenes, ignorance and other deadely diseases) neuertheles they thinke them selues in very good health, and that their righteousnesse is sufficient to enable them, to aunswere and satisfie the iudgement of God. As that proude Pharisie, who in steade of humblinge him selfe before God and confessing his faultes

A similitude taken of a comm̃ prouerb.

Luc. 18.11.

o to him setteth forth and extolleth his owne
Mat. 19.20 workes in his prayer. And the Scribe that
Luc. 2.23. bragged, that he had accomplished the whole law: and the Sinagogue, that boasted her selfe of her owne innocency, and in that, that she had not sinned. Wherfore God caused complaint to be made against her, to cõuince her of hipocrisie, and of the sinnes that she hadde forgotten, through negligence, and of the loue, that she ought to haue borne vnto him.

Although then that God doeth not alwayes discouer our faultes wholly vnto vs, he wil not therefore that we make light of them: but if we doe, he streightwayes calleth vs to areckning, and requireth them of vs, and constraineth vs to confesse them vnto him, that he may forgiue vs: to the ende, that we maye haue occasion hereby, to acknowledge and set forth his great liberalitie. And this is all that he requireth and demaundeth of vs for hauing acquited and discharged vs of such a great and notable summe, wherein we are indebted to him. For looke howe muche soeuer of the glorie of anye righteousnesse and vertue we attribute to our selues, so muche wee diminishe of the bountie and liberalitie of our God, and wee prouoke him to ielousie, because we beare him not that loue, nor reuerence, that wee owe vnto him,

but

but doe more loue our owne honour then his. And euen like as a husbande louing his wife tenderly, (to make his affection knowen vnto her, bestowing vpon her many great presentes of golde and costly Iewelles,) is very heauye if she dissemble the giftes which he hath bestowed vpon her, and say she hath purchased them by her owne mony: Euen so God can in no wise be pleased with vs, if we wil conceale or els attribute to our selues, the graces which he hath bestowed vpon vs, which he woulde haue to be testimonies, tokens and demonstrations of the inuiolable loue and fidelitie that he beareth vnto vs. *A similitude.*

Moises sayd vnto the people of Israel, whilest they were yet in the wildernes: When thou shalt come into the lande which God hath promised to thy fathers, and shalt haue taken possession thereof, and peaceably enioye the fruictes and delicate thinges that it shall bring forth vnto thee. Take good heede that thou say not, that thy strength and righteousnes hath gotten all this: but acknowledge that God, by his onely goodnes and loue which he beareth vnto thee, hath shewed these great benefits and fauours to thee, without hauing any respect of thee, who wast a rebellious and idolatrous people, nor to thy workes, which were altogether *Deut. 8. & 9.*

vicious and faultie: euen so if God hath once brought vs into his Church, let vs beware that we saye not that we haue merited or gotten the graces that be there communicated vnto vs by our owne industrie: but let vs continually confesse our powertie and vnworthynesse, and acknowledge with the Apostle, that in that wee are vertuous, we are so, by the meane of his onely goodnes: and then without all comparison we shalbe richer & happyer, then we should be, if we woulde be so, by our owne meane and by our owne strength: muche more I say by the liberality of our good God, who is much richer and more aboundaunt to geue vnto vs, then our owne strength and force can purchase, or heape vppon vs. And we must perswade our selues that God can doe vs more good in one moment, then we knowe howe to desire or to compasse by our trauell or diligence, in tenne millions of yeares.

Similitudes shewing that we haue neede to be iustified by the onely grace of God.

What cause then is there, that we shoulde not desire and labour to bee more rygh teous by the grace of our God, then by our owne vertue? A man shalbe a gret deale more healthfull that will be thoroughly gouerned by the regiment & counsell of some good and expert Phisitions, then he that will be lead altogether by his own appetite. A beast is agreate deale better gouerned

uerned by man, then it can bee by it selfe. A feilde, a vine, a tree, are in muche better case, being tilled, cutte and pruned by laborers and husbandemen, then if they were lefte to them selues. Bodies also beinge alone, and without any lyfe, are blockes, but hauing the soule and life in them, they are applied and vsed to an infinite number of goodly and excellent actions Whereby a man maye easely perceaue, that the inferiour natures to the ende they may bee well gouerned and ruled, haue neede of the gouernement & guiding of the superiour. Whēce commeth it then, that in the matter of righteousnesse, wee thinke that our reason and will haue more might, then the grace of our God?

There are certaine vaine glorious beastes which bragge that they haue gotten that which they knowe, by their owne onely diligence, and without the helpe of any other maister and teacher: and that they are no further bounde, for the good they knowe, then to their owne labour and trauell. And also there be some others yet more proude and arrogant, who thinke them selues with power sufficiently enabled, to get all vertues by their owne naturall faculties: as Pelagius and all his secte, who canne not better shewe their arrogancie and ignoraunce, then in thus pleasing them selues, in them

Pelagius & his sect.

selues, and hauing in suche estimation and admiration, the naturall force and power, which they falsly attribute to them selues. The which is an euident signe, that they neuer knew them selues nor the strength of their owne shoulders, in vaunting so of the weaknes and pouerty that is in them.

But for our partes, if we desire to be cladde with a righteousnes, which is able to stand before the face of God, and to appeare with assuraunce in his iudgement, let vs not seeke it in our selues, but let vs seeke it, and finde it, in the onely grace and mercie of our God. For (as S. Augustine sayth) there is nothing within vs, that can please and content him, but onely that, which he hath put in vs of his owne goodnesse.

Let vs not then follow these proude spirits, which delight and content them selues in nothing but in their owne workes, and through a dotinge imagination accompting & esteeming them goodly and perfect, euen as Apes doe their younge ones: but contrariwise, let all that is in vs, and all that we doe, displease vs, and let vs be the first Iudges to condemne our selues and our workes, forasmuch as the meane to come to righteousnes, is to bee able to approche with confidence, to the throne & iudgement

ment seate of our God, and continually to saye with the holy Apostle: I knowe that I am carnall and sould vnder sinne: by meanes whereof I can in no wise approue that which I doe. For I doe the euill which displeaseth me, and can not doe the good I loue and desire to doe, certainely there is not in me, (that is to say in my flesshe) any good thinge. I see and feele continually in my members a lawe which fighteth against the lawe of my minde, and leadeth me captiue to the lawe of sinne which is in my members. Rom. 7. 14.

O howe this confession ought throughly to beate downe the pride and arrogancie of those presumptuous ones, and stop vp the mouthes of all those that will be iustified by their owne workes and vertues. For it commeth from a vessel and instrument which God by special fauour had chosen from among all the men of the world, and who euen in those times of his ignoraunce liued in such sort according to the righteousnes of the lawe, that hee was blameless and vnrebukeable towardes men. What a one then might he be being regenerated, taken vp into the third heauen, where he had heard secretes, which it was not lawfull for him to vtter, & who had so greatly trauelled in the worke of the Lorde to plant and to water his Church, *A notable consideration vpon that Paule confesseth him selfe a miserable sinner.* 2. Cor. 12. 1. 1. Cor. 3. 6. Galat. 2. 6. 2. Cor. 11. 5, 23.

that therein he passed and farre out went all his companions. And to conclude, hee gaue place to none of them, neither in knowledge, nor in zeale, nor in highe, and diuine meditations, nor in diligence, nor in vertues, nor in any other thing which was agreable to his vocation, for his good and vpright walking therin. If then suche a person did in such sorte and so muche humble him selfe, what ought we to doe after him?

An other example of the humilitie of Isaie, the excellent seruaũt of God.

Isaie. 6. 6.

Isaie, whose mouth and tongue was cleansed by one of the Cherubins, and was sent from before the face of God for this purpose: who also had exercised his ministerie in the Churche of God the space of three score yeares and more, and without ceasing day and night, was as a good watchman vpon the wall to discouer the comming of the enemies, to the end that both him selfe, and those ouer whome he hadde charge might not be ouertaken through negligence: what sayth he of himselfe? and in what place and degree doth he put him selfe? Thou art (sayth he to God) our Creatour, and wee are nothing but earth and dust. All our righteousnes is as filthie cloutes, and we are all faded as a leafe, and our iniquities haue caryed vs as the winde: ther is none that calleth vpon thy name, nor that stirreth vp him selfe to laye holde

Isaie. 46. 8.

holde vppon thee: for thou hast hidde thy face from vs, and hast consumed vs because of out iniquities. Ought not this confession to make all the glorie and righteousnes of these proude hypocrites, to blushe for shame? Certainely the perfection which those imagine, deserueth not to be compared to the imperfection of those excellent seruaunts of God, nor their phantasticall riches and aboundance to their pouertie. For as much as the baseste golde, though it bee rayed with some dirte, is alwayes more precious then the brightest leade that a man can find. Euen so the righteousnesse of a Christian man, though it be defiled through many infirmities & imperfections, yet notwithstanding is more to be esteemed thē all the righteousnes of hypocrites and infidelles.

A similitude against the righteousnesse of hipocrites.

There is nothing better, then for a man to humble him selfe before God. Humilitie was the cause that the Caanitish who was otherwise a dogge, became a faithfull woman, and that her fayth was preferred, before the fayth of all the people of God. Because there is no better meane, to lift vs vppe, then to humble our selues: to be wyse, then to repute our selues fooles: to be strong, then to feele our owne debilitie and weakenes, And this S. Augustin confirming, sayeth that all our strength is in hu-

The fruite of Christian humilitie.

militie, and that there is nothing more weake and fraile then pride and presumption. Forasmuch as all proude persons staye them selues vpon their owne strength, that is, stay vppon a reede and vpon the ye of one nightes freesing: and are like vnto smoke that mounteth vp on high, and so in going vp is scattered and commeth to nothing. But the humble man is as a rocke or a square body, which is alwayes stayed on, which side soeuer it be turned, and there is no man (as sayth that same good father) so harde to be healed, as he that thinketh him selfe to be hoale: forasmuch as he alwayes refuseth counsell of the Phisition, and will take no remedies, nor keepe any good dyet or gouernmēt of him selfe, which should be meete and healthfull for him. Euen so likewise there is no man farther of from the righteousnesse of God, then he that hath some good opinion of him self. For such commonly are obstinate, & can not without great difficultie, be brought from the perswasion, which they haue conceaued of their owne righteousnes.

A similitude of the proude and of the humble.

Presumption very daūgerous.

There is then no greater presumption nor more daungerous in the worlde, then this. For whosoeuer presumeth so of his owne strength & vertue, & that he can of him self become wise, he maketh him selfe equal with God. For there is

is none but God, which is of him selfe, and by nature wyse, ryghteous, blessed and perfect. Men are not otherwise wyse, then by learning and instruction: nor ryghteous, but by grace: nor happie, but by the fruition and participation of the soueraigne good: If then a man will depende vpon him selfe, and establishe in him selfe the foundations of felicitie and happines, presuming that through the light & quickneſſe of his owne spirite, he can obtaine wysedome, and by the power of his owne will, righteousnes, and by the contentation and delight which he hath of his owne vertues and actions, perfect felicitie: certainly this man esteemeth him selfe to be lyke vnto God. But those persons that haue such an opinion, & presume so much of them selues, they are founde in the ende to come to short of their accompt: because it commeth to passe with them as it did wᵗ our forefathers, who when they acknowledged not the honour which God had bestowed vpō them, but went about to lift vp them selues in an higher degree then he had sette them, they fell at once headlong, and became like vnto bruite beastes: which thing happened to Nebucadnezar, who beinge become drunken and beſides him selfe through the great victories and prosperities that he had gotten, thought to mounte vp to

Nebucadnezar punished for his pride. Dan. 4. 22.

heauen and to make him selfe equall with God but contrary to his expectation, to beate downe and breake the idle thoughtes & discourses of his harte (no otherwise then happened to them that builded the Tower of Babel) God hauing attonce discharged him of his auctoritie, dignitie and mighte, togeather with the loue, obedience, feare and fidelitie of his subiectes, friends and seruaunts, in the end hauing made him lyke to wilde beastes, with whom he liued and did eate and drinke, as though they had ben his familiers and compagnions: he was taught by experience what it was, and the daũger thereof for an earthly man to seeke to exalt him selfe, and to take vpõ him to be haile fellow with God: forasmuch as he is ielous of his glorie, and can not at any hande abide that his glorie shoulde be abased or diminished, without being kindled & prouoked to reuenge him selfe vpon all those whom he findeth guiltie of any suche audacitie and rashenes. He woulde shewe vs that we are bounde vnto God for all the good thinges we haue, and that we owe vnto him therin faith and homage, and principally for those spirituall giftes of our goodnes and felicitie: so as he will be accuõpted and confessed to bee the chiefe cause and the authour of that we are, afterwardes for this that we are good,

Exod 20.5.

good, and to conclude for that we are blessed: and when so euer we will attribute any of these three thinges vnto our selues, or else referre that vnto any other then to him, he can not abide it.

Alexander the Great an image of all ambitious princes

Alexander the Greate hearing the rehersall of the greate victories and Conquestes which Philippe his father hadde gotten and made, was grieued, for that his father hauinge so brought into subiection the whole country and brideled his enemies on euery side, had alreadye taken from him all hope of doinge any honorable or glorious thing. As he had borne himselfe in hande he woulde doe, it so falling out that matter and occasion to implope him selfe, and his power fayled him not. For this is the propertie of all valiant and noble Princes, to bee agrieued when they loose opportunitie to make them selues esteemed and to winne honour and renowme by their prowesse, and that they are constrained to rest them selues and be idle at home in their house, as michinge cowardes and dastardes. In so much as there is nothing that they are more greedie of then the glorie and immortalitie of their names. Is it then any maruell if God who is altogether perfecte, and in whom a man can not reprehende any thing, or desire any thing, should in such sorte loue his

glory? seeing that sinnefull men are so desirous of theirs, if once they thinke to haue any thing in them that is commendable. But as concerning vs, we maye not suffer our selues to bee vanquished or ouermaistred of any suche passion, which (as S. Augustine sayeth) is the worst guide, & most daungerous counsailour, that wee canne choose, to rule and gouerne our actions by. And it is impossible but that wee shoulde obeye this passion, when once we are subnitted vnto it, and become the selaues thereof.

Wherefore that we may go safely, we must be maintcined in a simple humilitie, not lifting vp our hartes to hie, but in suche wise taming our appetites, that we be like to litle children that come from the nourse. They that goe the playne waye, are not in so great daunger to fal as they which goe vpon the ridge of houses, or vppon the toppe of some high mountayne: Euen so they that will be modest and haue no opinion of them selues, they goe a great deale more safely and surely, then they which haue a bigge heart and loftie lookes. For the waye that leadeth to lyfe is straight. And so is the gate whereby a man must enter there. Wherefore if we will passe thereat, we must not be so bigge and puffed vp with an opinion of our selues:

A similitude shewing the fruite of humilitie.

selues: but we must be leane and spare, and we must not esteeme more of our selues then wee are worth.

Philo the Iewe writeth that the cause why leauen was forbiddin the Iewes, at the feast of the Passeouer was, to geue thē to vnderstand that by this prohibition, they had to keepe thē selues from the daunger of pride and presumption, into which they doe easely slide and fall, which haue any opinion of them selues, puffing vp them selues therby as the dough is with the leauen. Wherefore it is very requisite that we take good heede, in all our workes, to followe that counsell which our sauiour Christ giueth touching our almes: to witte, that our left hand know not what our right hand doeth. He would teach therby, that we ought to be so vertuous, that our vertuebe knowen to all the worlde, to the ende to edifie them which shall see it and knowe it: but of our selues it must not bee knowen, for feare that we knowinge it, it engender some presumption in vs, which might corrupt that foresayde vertue: lyke as the leauen sowreth the dough wherein it is mingled. But this ambition, as it is masked and disguised, so it knoweth very well howe to dissemble, and to flatter our oppetites: so as wee can hardly take heede to our selues yea though

An allegorie of the leauen forbidden for the Iewes

we studie the best we can, to be humble: so far-
forth as it stealeth unwares uppon us, and
shroudeth it selfe secretly within our harte,
within which oftentimes it is founde or euer
we wist that it was entred. And this is the rea-
son why S. Augustine sayeth, that all other
sinnes are to be feared and fled indifferently of
all persons: but the most perfect and the best
exercised and experienced in vertue ought prin-
cipally to take heede of this rocke. For, as
wormes engender sooner in softe and tender
wood, then in other that is more harde & knot-
tie: and likewise as mothes doe breed sooner in
fine woll, then in course flockes: euen so ambi-
tion sooner assaulteth an excellēt and rare man
in all kinde of vertue, then an other which is
not so vertuous.

A similitude against ambition.

It is therefore very needefull that we take
good hede that we be not sleepy, neither become
slouthfull, as it happened somtimes unto Da-
uid, as him selfe confesseth, saying: when I was
in prosperitie I thought I shoulde neuer bee
shaken: The Lord hauing in such sorte estabi-
shed me & under propted me by his grace, so as
I assured my selfe to be firme as the rocke: but
assoone as he had turned away his countenance
& withdrawen his spirit from me, I was found
on the earth, and I beganne to know and feele

Psal. 30. 7.

my

my feeblenes and infirmitie. It is conuenient therefore that we be vigilant to consider well all the meanes, and preuent all those wayes by which we may be taken and deceaued. There be some which are lyke to those that tugge at the Dare in a Galley. A man woulde iudge seeing their manner of doinge and howe they streatch their armes forwarde: that they would goe on and sayle foorth right: when with all their might they enforce themselues to drawe backewardes: euen so beinge vaine glorious, they will neuertheless perswade, ẏ they haue nothing in greater detestatiō then vaine glorie when there is not any thing whereof they are more desirous and greedie. Such in times past were the Pharises as are yet at this daye the Priests and Monks of the Papacie, who haue their hartes swolne and puffed vp with ambition: which they cloke and colour vnder the vizarde and outwarde shew of humilitie. These may be resembled to Antisthenes, who on a time walked in the common place at Athens, with a cloke all to torne and totered, to the end that euery on: beholdinge him so apparailed, might iudge that he did it through humilitie, and not for lacke of goodes because he was a man well esteamed and of good reputatiō. But Socrates hauing discouered by the readynes

A similitude against ambitious hipocrites.

To whom hypocrites may be resembled.

Antisthenes noted of hypocrisy by Socrates

and ripenes of his good vnderstanding & iudgment the hipocrisie of this philosopher, sayd all a loude, that he sawe his ambition, through the hoales of his cloke. Diogenes also entring on a time into Plato his chamber, and seeing his bed veri finely made (because being of a ciuile and gentleman like nature, he was nete in his moueables, apparell, and gestures, and to be short in all his conuersation) he went and wallowed him selfe like a swine vpon it, saying that he trampled downe Platoes pryde: but Plato aunswered readely, that this was done wyth a greater pryde: whereby it maye appeare that there are many counterfaite humilities, seruing for none other purpose but to abuse the simple, who can not beware of them.

Plato noted of pride by Diogenes, whom likewise he reproued for that offence.

There be of them others, who hauing a certaine verball humilitie in mouthe onely, saye they presume not any thing of them selues, and that they woulde they were as cleane from other sinnes as from that of ambition. And yet a man may easely knowe by their fetches, the great desire & greedines that they haue of honours, seeking all the wayes they can, to compasse them, and piteously tormentinge them selues, when they see they are frustrat of them. Adde hereunto, that they desire to be flattered, and are neuer so well contente as when they

Humilitie in wordes,

heare

heare them selues extolled, and their owne prayses set out: contrariwyse neuer so displeased, as when they see men hushte and say nothing prayse woorthie of them: or any manner of waye to obscure them: Wherein they discouer their notable hypocrisie, and shewe euidently, that they are lyers, and accuse and condemne them selues: when they confesse that they are tainted with other sinnes, and yet will be free from this of ambition. For (as S. James sayeth:) He that sinneth in one point of the lawe he is giltie of all. Which thing euery one may acknowledge in him selfe, if he will well examine the bottome, and secrets of his owne conscience and consider by peecemeale all the circumstaunces of euery sinne. For as among the vertues there is such a chayne as intertaineth and embraseth eache other, (as men that are in a round, or that hold one an other by the hand) euen so among vices there is such a conspiratiõ as lightely they are neuer sundred one from the other. Whereupon we must thinke that we can not be giltie of any one vice, but we must also in like manner be giltie of all the other. *Iames.2. 10.*

These then be not those humilities, (beinge counterfaite and bastardlyke) that it becommeth vs to bringe to the iudgement of God, to defende vs: forasmuche (as Dauid saith (that

the cause of all reprobates shall there be quite overthrowen, and all their actions condemned beinge straunge from God. But the true humilitie which God requireth, and which is necessarie, for to make vs appeare with confidence before his face, is a true knowledge which we ought to haue of our selues, and which engendreth in vs true feelinge of our vices and imperfections, and causeth vs to bewayle and lament, to accuse and confesse them before God: and maketh vs alwayes ashamed and confounded before his maiestie: in suche sorte that when we appeare before him, we dare no more lifte vp our eyes to heauen, then that publicane: but looking downe to the earth we saye with him: Lorde be mercifull to me poore and wretched sinner: and with Dauid: wash me O Lord from my iniquitie, & cleanse me from all my sinnes. Also as he layth elsewhere: Enter not into iudgement with thy seruaunt: For no man liuing shalbe iustified in thy presence: and with Daniel: O Lord, to thee belongeth righteousnes, and to vs shame and confusion: for we haue sinned, we haue committed iniquitie, we haue bene wicked and rebellious, and haue alwayes bene contrarie to thy commaundementes and iudgements.

Gregorie the diuine.

Luc. 18. 14.

Psal. 54. 4.

Psal. 143. 2.

Dan. 9. 5. 7.

With such an humilitie and confession, we may

maye at all houres present our selues before God, and bee assured that he will not reiect vs from his presence: because (as Dauid sayeth) hee neither despiseth nor reiecteth sorowefull soules, harts that are humbled and cast downe and penitent spirits. Isay sayth: vpon whome shall the spirite of the Lorde rest, but vpon the humble, and vpon him that trembleth at his worde? S. Augustine sayeth: that men ioyne them selues and seeke out such as are their equalls, and may matche them in greatnesse, dignitie and riches: but contrariwise God who is the soueraigne in maiestie and highnesse, he ioyneth him selfe to none, but to those that are humble and lowly in their owne sight.

Psal. 51. 19.

Isai 66. 2.

S. Augustin

Like will to his like

Let vs conclude then that there is nothing so necessarie and expedient, as to humble and throw downe our selues, as hath ben said. We see that reedes and young osiers, which bowe and yelde to the winde, abide stable for the time of the tempest, where as the greate trees that seeme to be so strong and so well rooted, can not resist the violence and force of a great winde, so as many times they are blowen downe, shiuered and rooted vp by the rootes: euen so there is none lost, condemned, destroyed and ouer throwen in the iudgement of God: but he that will be there coumpted good, and will defende

The cõclusiõ touching Christiã humilitie.

A similitude.

him selfe there with the vertue & strength of his owne righteousnes. For this is as a great thunder, that neuer putteth forth his might but against thinges of resistaunce: but against any heape of earth, or against a wolle packe, or some such other flexible & yeeldinge sustaunce, the blow is broken and it streighwayes dyeth. It is a great reproch and shame amongst men for a man to breake and become bankerout for worldly goods: but before God it is a great glorie and honour, and we know not how to do any thing more profitable and honourable for vs, then as (a man woulde saye) to laye the keyes vnder the doore, and to forsake all, confessing that we haue no meane to pay, and to discharge our selues towardes his righteousnes. We had needs in this case to be lyke couetous men, who alwayes thinke that they are poore, how great substaunce soeuer they haue, because they haue more regard to that they desire, thē to that they haue. Moreouer, they thinke alwayes (as the Poete sayeth) that their neighbours vineyarde & fielde is goodlier & more fruteful then theirs. We in like maner considering both our selues and the whole estate of our lyfe, shall finde that that which is maymed and wantinge in vs, is more then that which eyther we haue or canne haue here in this worlde. Let vs not thinke there-

Similitudes shewing what the thoughts of the faithful ought to be when they present thē selues before God.

therefore to be riche before God, or that our neighbors are poorer then we, as the Pharisie thought and sayd: but let vs be certaine and resolued in this opinion, that before God we haue not any thing whereof we make sure accompt: neither righteousnes nor wisdome, nor vertue, that we may set out or alleage before his iudgement. And touching our neighbours we must alwayes thinke, that we haue so litle, that we maye not once dare preferre or compare our selues to any of them.

The second point shewing that wee must finde though not in our selues, a perfecte righteousnes that may stande before god: & in what that righteousnes consisteth.

Nowe being thus prepared to presente our selues before God, to witte, thorough a right knowledge of our selues, thorough an inwarde feeling of our vices and corruptions, and by an humble confession of our errours and imperfections, it is meete yet to seeke out a righteousnes, that we may bring it out there, and such a one as is not onely sufficient to sustaine the rigour and severitie of that iudgement: but also to obtaine full forgiuenes and iustification of all sinnes and offences, and of all accusations which our aduersaries can allege there against vs: which we can not finde in our selues, nor in any mortall man as we haue shewed and declared before. For all haue gone astraye and are of them selues abominable before God, there is not one that doeth good no not one. Noath was

Psal. 14. 1 Rom. 3. 12. Gen. 9. 21.

Numb. 20. 24. drunke: Moses murmured at the waters of Miribah: Abraham was an Idolater: Dauid *Iosua* 24.2. a murtherer and adulterer: S. Paule a perse- *2.Sam*,11.4 cutour of the Church: S. Peter denied Iesus *1.Tim.*1.13 Christ: S. John with his brother James, and *John.*18.25. the other Apostles were ambitious. To con- *Mat.*20.20 clude, there was not any among all the fathers *Luc.* 22.24. and Saintes, that haue bene since the founda- tion of the worlde, vnto whom it hath not come to passe to committe some one notable fault or other in their life time, and who not continually acknowledged his great sinnes, as occasiõ hath *1.Cor.*1.29. bene offred vnto him. So as no flesh hath wher- of to boast it selfe or to glorie before God, who hath shut all men vnder sinne and infidelitie, to *Rom.*11.32 the ende, that he may haue mercie on all, & that euery one may acknowledge and confesse, that his saluation in and through all, consisteth in the onely grace and mercie of God.

Our righte- ousnes is in Christ Iesus alone.

We must not therefore thinke to finde the righteousnesse that we seeke after, any where else, then in Iesus Christ, of whom Ieremie sayeth: his name is called the eternall, our Righteousnes. S. Paule sayeth, agreably to *1.Cor.*1.30. the Prophet, that he was made our Righte- ousnes, wisedom, sanctification and Redemp- *Rom.*5.19. tion. And else where he sayeth: that as by one mans disobedience, many became sinners: so by

by the obedience of an other, many shall becom righteous. To what tendeth all that which is spoken of him in the scripture? to witte that he hath payed our debtes: that by him we are reconciled to God his father: that he hath obteyned for vs remission of our sinnes: that he is our resurrection and our lyfe, and our intercessour to the father, that by his death and sacrifice, he hath pacified the wrath of his father against vs: that he hath washed vs in his bloud: and by an infinite number of other excellent sentences that are sette out vnto vs, and tende to no other ende, but to make vs know and to perswade vs, that there is no other but he alone who is our righteousnes, and the meane of our saluation and of our lyfe.

Isai.53.4. *Collos.1.20.* *2.Cor.5.19.* *Iohn.11.25* *1 Timo 2.5.* *Esay.53.5.* *Apoc.1.6.*

It is not then the lawe, nor any other ceremonies or sacrifices of goates, sheepe, oxen and lambes, nor yet any workes and vertues that can iustifie vs before God: but the onely bloud of Iesus Christ, through which his testament and newe couenaunt which he hath made with vs, is passed, accorded, sealed and ratified. All thinges (sayth he) are geuen vnto me of God my father. If we then will haue all that is necessarie for our happynesse, as the fauour of God, righteousnes, lyfe, light, the forgeuenes of our sinnes, and the holy spirit to regenerate

Heb.9.10. *Tit.3.5.* *Mat.11.27.*

and sanctifie vs: we must addresse our selues to
Iohn.6.27. Christe, forasmuche as it is he, whom the father hath chosen to bee Treasuroure and stewarde of all his graces. Moses by whom the law was published and deliuered to the people, conducted them safely through the deserte: but he brought them not to the place of their rest:
Iosu.1.6. For that was Iosue, who was a figure of Iesus Christ, who made them passe ouer Iordaine, to establyshe them in that possession and inheritaunce which God had promised vnto their fathers.

The effect of the lawe toward the faythfull. Similitudes

The lawe therefore may well leade vs and teache vs the way that we must take and walke in the middest of the darkenes and wilderneſſe of this worlde, like as some marke by the waye sides, may well directe vs, and shewe vs which waye to take: but the lawe can not giue vs strength and courage to go thorough, if wee be weary, neither enable vs to come to the place
Heb.4.8. whither wee goe. Likewise the lawe can not bringe vs to ỳ rest, which God hath promised vnto his elect, nor any other but our great Iosue, that is to say, Iesus Christ our Lorde, who onely can doe it, by his righteousnes. There-
S. Augustin vpon S. Ioh. fore S. Augustin sayde very well: it is very necessarie that we dayly lift vp our eyes on high, to beholde that Serpent hanging dead on the Crosse,

Crosse, to the ende we may be preserued from the venome and bytinge of that serpent that is aliue and reigning yet in the worlde. And in an other place he sayeth: this is the waye in which we must walke, and the truth vpō which we must rest, & the path in which we must goe.

When then we are once marching towards him, we ought not to feare but that going on in this waye, and continuinge therin, wee shall come in the ende to the goale and to the felicitie, whether we bende our selues. Forasmuch as this is a sure way which can not be stopped nor layde with theeues, nor drowned with any showers or flooddes of water. Moreouer, it is plaine, and streight and hath neither rockes nor blockes or any other lettes which maye make vs stumble. It remaineth onely then that when we are in this waye, we keepe our selues there without standinge still, or going backewards, or turning aside either to the right hand or the left: be cause we can no soner leaue it, nor departe in any other manner, but by and by we goe astraye, and are layde open to all kinde of daungers: Euen like as in winter wee can no sooner be from the fier, but we are colde, nor out of light but we enter into darkenesse: euen so we can no soner be parted frō Iesus Christ, who is our righteousnes & our life, but streight

Christ is only the waye the truth & by se.

Similitude

waye we are in sinne and in death: forasmuch as he is the life that quickeneth vs, the Sunne that giueth vs light, and the fier ẏ warmeth, comforteth and refresheth all his members. As ẏ moone hath no light but that it hath from the Sunne, and as the light is litle or great, as it is neare or farre of, in suche sort that if it departe from it, it remaineth altogether obscure and darke: Euen so in like manner the Church hath no light, righteousnes, life health, strength and happynes, but that, which it hath pleased her husband Iesus Christ to giue vnto her, because of that vnion and fellowshippe, which he hath with her. Wherefore if at any time she be separated from him, and that there be a diuorse between her and her husband, there remayneth to her nothinge but darkenesse, vice and wretchednesse.

Gen.2.23. Ephe.5.30. The regeneration of the church.

Eue in the beginninge was created of the flesh, bone, and bloude of her husband: euen so the Church is regenerated by the participatiõ that she hath with the fleshe of Iesus Christ, through the sacrificing whereof she was redeemed, washed & purged from all filthines in his bloude, and through the participation of his bones was fortified and maintayned against all tentation. For he who in the beginning was the aucthour of our lyfe, he is likewise now the aucthour

aucthour of our good lyfe. And we must not thinke that there are two diuers beginnings of our being and righteousnesse. For he him selfe that hath made vs mẽ, hath also made vs Christians: and as in the beginning he created vs and made vs of nothing: euen so afterwardes, he regenerated vs beinge nothing, but vanitie the children of wrath and maledictiõ: and when we were worsse then nothing he chose vs and that before we were conceaued and borne, he hath called vs when as rebellious seruauntes to maisters, wee fledde from him: when we turned our backes to him: he iustified vs beinge sinners, sanctified vs being prophane and polluted, raised vs vp being dead: And will also glorifie vs although we be yet altogether couered with ignominie and corruption: wherupon a man maye inferre that, which S. Cyprian sayeth is very true: that in our saluation wee must glorie in nothing. For there is not any thinge of ours, and which we shoulde not confesse to be wholly from God. S. Cipria.

If we will examine this throughly, and consider it in euery part, we shall confesse the truth whatsoeuer the schoolemen prate & bable, that of our selues we can dispose our selues to receaue our saluation when soeuer God offreth it vnto vs. It is so farre of that it can be true, that *The confutation of their erour which saye that it is in our owne power to di-*

spouse our selues to receaue our saluation, when God offereth it vnto vs. Actes.9.5.

quite contrary we are thē wholly turned away and resist against it with all our power. Which thinge may plainely appeare by the example of S. Paule, who was called and ledde by Jesus Christ, as it were by strong hand to his sheepfolde, euen then, when he was goinge to Damascus, being caryed with a deadly hatred, and enflamed with furie to persecute and vtterly to roote out (if he coulde,) the memorie of his name. There is nothinge more certaine, then that S. Augustine sayth that all they that labour and swett vnder the heauie burden of this flesh, and complaine of this miserable life, they haue but one onely consolation and hope, that is to saye, that Jesus Christ is their Mediatour & their righteousnes. By reason wherof whē he made his entraunce into the middest of Jerusalem, all that went before and behinde him cryed out with one voice, Hosanna, &c. that is to saye: Saue vs O sonne of Dauid our Sauiour. To the end to shew that there was neuer good man nether before nor after his comming which did hope to be saued by any other meanes, then onely through his righteousnesse and obedience. And therefore S. Augustine sayeth, that all the Sainctes, since Abell vnto John Baptist, and after the Apostles, vnto the ende of the worlde ought not to be praised

S. Augustin

S. Augustin

sed but in him and not in them selues. In so much that the first haue sayde, My soule shall reioyce in the Lorde: and those that came after haue saide in like manner: By grace I am that I am: and all in generall saye: That whosoeuer will glorie he must glorie in God. *Psal.34. 3.* *1.Cor.15.10.*

And in very truth this is he that hath borne the wooll and the fleece, of which was sponne this cloth, wherewith we must be clad, that we may be shrowded against heats, cold, and other iniuries of heauen, All you (sayeth the Apostle) which are baptised in Christ, haue put on Christ. This is that king, who for the adorning of the Queene his spouse hath made for her ritch and sumptuouse robes, as the Psalmist sayeth: which thinge Ezechiel sheweth also more clearely: I haue washed the with water, yea I haue washed away thy blud from thee, in which thou was altogether polluted: I haue annoynted thee with oyle, and clothed thee also with broydred worke, and haue sette a crowne of Golde vppon thy head: and I haue decked thee with Golde and siluer, that thou mightest be very bewtifull. All that same long Allegorie, which he vseth ther in the xvi. of his prophesie, is to no other ende, but to extoll the righteousnes of Jesus Christ, with which the Church is apparailed and adorned: with those *The perfection and righteousnes of Iesus Christ.* *Gal.3 27.* *Psal.45 14.* *Ezec.16.9.*

other pretious giftes, graces and blessings wherewith she is altogether couered and repleniſhed. And as there is nothing, more vncleane then she, when she is naked: so is there nothing more beautifull then she, when she is decked in the liuerie and colour of her husband. For then hath she a speciall grace, that makes her verie amiable, delightfull, and in passing good liking to God himselfe: Moreouer, being so clothed in this robe of innocencie, all that was foule in her, and which disfigured her, is in suche sorte couered and defaced, that there appeareth no more vncleanes in any part of her, because Jesus Christ (as S. Augustine sayeth) is as a spounge which wipeth vs & cleanseth vs from all our filthynes, which he taketh in exchaunge for the beautie, righteousnesse, and perfection, which he communicateth vnto vs: Wherein we ought to acknowledge and to adore this great and incomparable loue which he beareth vs, and which he hath truely and in effect shewed vnto vs, heapinge vppon vs at the daye of our mariage so great and pretious iopes: although he receaue nothing of vs in dowrie, but olde baggage altogether couered with thicke and filthie dirte: to witte, euen our imperfections and iniquities

We receaue then, in doing this thinge two great

great commodities of his righteousnes, which serue vs for two purposes: to witte first to draw vs out from the mier and claye wherein wee were buried: to decke vs with goodly robes wherewith we are clad, to make vs beautifull: that is to saye, to deliuer vs from the malediction and curse wherunto we were fallen: and then on the other side to blesse vs and to bring vs into fauour with God his father, to drawe vs backe from pouertie, and to enriche vs: to raise vs vp from death, and to giue vs life: to drawe vs from hell, and to make vs mounte vp into heauen. Euen as Iesus Christ on the one part hath deliuered vs from feare, terrour and torment of conscience, sparring and shutting vp hell gates: so on the other he hath set vs in a certaine and vndoubted hope of euerlasting life, and of a blessed rest, openinge his paradise vnto vs. This is that, which is sayde of him in the scripture: that he keepeth the keys of death and of life: the one, to make fast and shut vp the gate, which was alwayes open to swallowe vs vp and deuour vs: and the other, to open vnto vs the kingdome of heauen, which was alwayes locked and shutte against vs. By meane whereof at his death the vaile that let the entrance into the Sanctuarie was broken and cleste into two partes: to the end that that way

Christ deliuereth vs from death, and giueth vs eternall life.

Apoc. 1. 18.

Mat. 27. 51

might be made open for vs, and that euery one might haue a meane and libertie to come vnto God, and to present them selues before him with confidence. This is the cause that Paule
Heb.9.10. writing to the Hebrewes sayd: that by his flesh he hath prepared a way for vs to heauen, to attaine vnto lyfe. Forasmuch as he hath in that flesh rendred vnto God for vs perfect obedience: and by his death hath satisfied his righteousnes for our sinnes, obtaining for vs by this meanes the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, and through this remission righteousnes, and by righteousnesse the grace and fauour of God, and by Grace, life: in such sort as we may nowe presente our
Isai.33.14. selues to him in all assuraunce: who before was as a consuming fire, to consume vs and bring vs to nothing. &c. but now by the meanes of Iesus Christ is a shadowe to relieue and refreshe vs againe.

By Iesus Christ alone we haue accesse vnto God the father.

This is the reason for which Iesus Christ was figured, by the ladder which Iacob sawe when he slept, wherevpon the glorie of God
Gen.28.12. rested it selfe. Forasmuch as in the humanitie of Christ dwelled the fulnes of the Diuinitie
Coloss.2.9. bodely, because by it God descendeth downe vn to vs: Euen as Iesus christ hauing taken our
Isai.7.8. humanitie, was called Emmanuel, which is asmuche to say as God is with vs, so also we through

through him mounte vp as it were by degrees to heauen, where our conuersation is, & wherof at this day we are Citizens & of the householde of God. Being then very God and very man of two diuerse natures, the one diuine and the other humaine, which are coniopned and vnited together inseparablie, without any confusion or diuision: in that he is God, we must goe vnto him to be in safety, and to liue happely: and on the other side in þ he is man, he is the way by which we must marche on to attaine to euer lasting life. So thē we must go to Iesus Christ that is God, by Iesus Christ that is man, by the woꝛd that is made flesh, to the woꝛde which was in the beginning with God, and by the bꝛeade which men eate vnto the bꝛeade which Angells eate. *Mat. 1: 23. Philip. 3. 20. Ephe 2. 19. S. Augustin*

And there is no neede that we seeke foꝛ any other but him, wether it be to rest our selues in, oꝛ to leade and direct vs thither. Foꝛ being God, he is the soueraigne good, and the ende whereunto all our appetites and desires ought to be directed. And when we are come thither, there is the place where we must rest and altogether repose our selues: foꝛasmuch as he is perfect and replenished with all vertue & righteousnes, which he communicateth vnto vs, by meanes of that communion and fellowship that *All our felicitie consisteth in. Christ alone*

we haue with him. To conclude then, he is the way that must leade vs to our felicitie, and the onely meane to make vs attaine thither. Whē we are washed with his bloude, this is it that preserueth vs from that destroyer, this is the cloude that shrowdeth vs from beinge burned & consumed with the extreme heat of ỹ wrath of God, and the libertie whereinto we must retire from the furie of the enemie that persueth so harde after vs. To be shorte, this is the gate of saluation and the hauen where we must harborre and saue our selues in the time of tempeste.

We obtain through Christ the blessing of God.

This is the cloke vnder which we may obtaine the blessing of God, as Iacob obtayned that of his father Isaake, being disguised with the apparell of his elder brother Esau. And as the high Priest neuer appeared before the face of God, without his holy embroidred garmēts his Ephod, his robe, and his other priestly apparell, without which he coulde not finde any fauour when he appeared in his presence: Euen so (to follow the truth of this figure) we ought neuer to presente our selues before God (if we will be accepted and receued of him,) but we must be clothed and decked with the righteo usnes and innocēcie of his sonne: wherwith if we be once couered, we neede not feare that we

Gen. 27. 19

Exod. 28. 2.

we shalbe reiected and dispised of him, or that there is any enemie whosoeuer he be, that hath any power to hurt vs. For suche armour can defende vs euen from the wrath of God it selfe, against which no other thinge can resist.

It is written that Alexander hauing conceaued a greate hatred against the citie of Ierusalem, was fully resolued vtterly to destroye it because that layinge siege to the citie of Tyr: the inhabitauntes of Ierusalem had refused to helpe him with victualles and other munition which he had demaunded of them. Nowe after that he had taken Tyr, he marched forth with all his armie against Ierusalem, with full purpose vtterly to destroy it. The which thing whē the high Priest named Iaddus vnderstoode, he apparailed him selfe with the holy garmentes of the high Priest, and so presented himselfe before Alexāder, who vpon the suddaine, when he sawe him in this habite, alighted from his horse, and bowed his knees before Iaddus, and reuerenced him, and shewed him great honours, and great loue to the countrey, and gaue great giftes to the temple. Nowe if an enemie so furious and terrible were so suddainely appeased, at the onely sight of this high Priest so apparailed (who was but a figure of Iesus Christ:) what shall it be when Iesus Christ

Ioseph lib. 11. de antiqui. Iudaic. cap. 8.

shall appeare in his glorie and his members with him, clad and couered with his righteousnes, and shewing them selues to all the woꝛld, in such and so magnificall and glorious apparell? Shall not the deuills and hell bowe their knees then foꝛ feare when they shall see him in his maiestie and in suth excellent glorie?

Let vs conclude then that beinge garnished and couered with the righteousnesse of Iesus Chꝛist, we can haue no lacke of strengthe and might to vanquish and ouercome our enemies, noꝛ of any other thing that may make vs perfectly happy what soeuer. As S. Ambꝛose wꝛiteth very elegantly, in his seconde booke of Virginitie, that Iesus Chꝛist is vnto vs, all in all things: If we be sicke, he is our phisition If we haue an ague, and that we are altered, he is our fountaine: If we be laden with iniquitie he is our righteousnes: If we be weake and weryed, he is our strength: If we feare death, he is our life: If we desire to mount vp to heauen, he is our ladder: If we haue bene darkenes he is our light: If we haue hungered he is our bꝛead and norishement. Whereupon we may perceaue and knowe the great riches and commodities that Iesus Chꝛist bꝛingeth vnto all them that possesse him.

S. Ambrose.

Nowe hauing shewed that there is no other righteousnes

righteousnes, but the righteousnes of Christ, which can be sufficient to beare the rigour of the iudgement of God, and that maye enable vs to appeare and aunswer there: it remayneth now that we declare vppõ what matter it worketh and where it resteth and dwelleth: how it may be obtained: and in what sort a man maye assure himselfe of it: finally, hauing obtained it, what fruites it bringeth foorth in vs.

The thirde point shewing in whõ the iustice of God is, and howe a man maye obtaine it.

First the righteousnes of Christ hath two principall partes, to witte Iustification, and Sanctification, that is to say: when it is communicated vnto vs, although that before wee were the wickedest in the worlde, and guilty of death before God, and moreouer, that our nature was altogeather corrupted and tepnted in euery part of it: notwithstanding all this, wee are holden and reputed for righteous before God, and are allowed and receaued of him for his children and heires, when wee are prouided of this righteousnes, and when we are clothed with it, he geueth vs his holy spirite, to leade vs and conduct vs (as a schoolemaister doth his children) and for to sanctifie, instruct, and strengthen vs in all his wayes. And that this is true S. Paule writeth, not onely that it was sayd of Abraham that this his faith was counted to him for righteousnes: but also that

The righteousnes of Christ hath two partes.

How we are iustified.

Rom.4.22.

wee shalbe accoũpted righteous before God, as he was, if wee beleeue in Iesus Christ: Also,
2.Cor.5.19. God was in Christ, and reconciled the worlde to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes vnto thē. And ioyninge both these partes togeather in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, he sayd to them speaking of their lyfe, that they had bene altogether led in wickednes and were dissolute in all kinde of mischiefe: but that they
1.Cor.6.11. were now washed, iustified and sanctified in the name of Iesus Christ, and through the spirite of God.

We are iustified & sanctified bi the righteousnes & holynes of Christ.

The first reason.

Now if we will knowe by what meane this is done, wee must note, that being vnited by fayth in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and grafted in him, (as members in their body,) that he is then become our head, and wee are ioyned to him as the husbande to his wyfe. By meanes whereof he chargeth him selfe wyth all our debtes, and appointeth him selfe to be the aunswere and pledge for vs, to the ende hee maye paye all for vs and throughly acquite vs of all, that we are indebted and bound for, offering himselfe to satisfie the righteousnes of God, by his owne death, to the which death we were bounde by reason of our sinnes: and to delyuer vs by his Crosse, from the curse, to which we
Gala. 3.13 were likewise subiect, for hauing dysobeyed

the

the will of God, and broken his lawe, in a thousande and a thousande thinges: he hath also raised out our disobediēce, by his obediēce, which being so perfect & accomplished in all pointes, he hath supplied and made amendes for all our faultes and imperfections, and for the duetie wherewith we were bounde to God with all our might, being his creatures, children and seruaunts. The death then which Iesus Christ hath suffred, the sacrifice which he hath offered the curse which he hath borne, & the obedience that he hath rendred: all this was done in our name, and for our discharge, and is receaued before the iudgemēt of God, for acquital in ful payment and discharge of all our debtes, in such sort that no more can be demaūded againe of vs, he hauing through his innocencie fully satisfied that promise which he hath made for vs. Behold the first reason why the righteousnes of Iesus Christ is imputed vnto vs and accepted of God in his iudgement. *Rom.5.19*

The seconde reason is, that being knitte and vnited together by mariage, both we & he are but one body and one flesh: and there is a mutuall communion betweene vs. And as he participateth with our afflictions, miseries, pouerties and infirmities, so when we are persecuted by tyrants, he complaineth with vs and lamen- *2. Reason. Ephe.5.30.*

teth our aduersities and sorowes, likewise, when we are hungrye, sicke diseased, in prison &c. he beareth and endureth all our calamities with vs. We also on the contrarie part are partakers of all his benefites, graces and giftes which his father hath bestowed vpon him: and in generall of all that he hath done and suffered for our saluation and redemption: we are anointed, as he was, with the oyle of his holy spirite we are deade and buryed with him, and we are raised vp and caryed into heauē with him wher we are sette at the right hande of God his father, as he is. We are inheritours together with him, and we haue part in his glorie, in his rest & in all his felicitie, by meane of his righteousnes, obedience & innocencie, of all which through his grace we are made partakers. Also, of his death, sacrifice and satisfaction. And to conclude, as marchantes whiche are of one companie & become parteners, are partakers alike of all the profittes and damages which growe of their marchandise: euen so Iesus Christ, by reason of that societie wee haue together with him, gieueth vs a parte, and wee likewise giue him of all that we haue and possesse. The difference that is in this, is, that the gaines & losses, that come of the traffique that is exercised amongst men is equall and common

Rom.6.4. Colos.3.1.

Ephe.2.22. Rom.8.17.

A similitude.

mon amongest them all, but here we gather vp all the fruictes that arise of the righteousnes of Jesus Christ: he on the contrarie part taketh vpon him, and chargeth him selfe with all the damages and losses that came of our disobedience.

The thirde reason for whiche the righteousnes of Christ is imputed vnto vs, is, that being knitte to him, as the members of a bodie are to their head (the which by meanes of this coniunction receaue thence one influence which giueth them lyfe, and distributeth to each their motions and senses according as is fit for their nature, and as is requisite for their actions (we receaue from him as S. Paule sayeth, our, life, our nourishment, our grouth, our force and strength: for the enabling and disposing of vs to doe those good workes that belong vnto our vocation. And by reason of this coniunction there is suche an vnion betwixt him and vs, that as he communicateth with vs in our afflictiõs: so we likewise on the other side communicate with him in his riches: we are righteous by his righteousnes, we are acquited by his satisfaction, we are quickened to lyfe by his death, and obey God through his obedience. And euen as in a naturall bodie, the power that the eye hath to see, serueth more to ẏ vse of ẏ other

3. Reason. Ephes. 1. 2.

A similitude.

members then for it selfe, because that seeing and marking them all it is watchfull rightly to guide them, and to direct euery on of their actions, not being able in the meane time to see them selues, nor to serue it selfe: euen so the righteousnes, innocencie & obedience of Christ Iesus, stande vs in more stead then him, seeing that notwithstanding he had all these thinges, and was in his nature, lyfe, and whole conuersation absolute and perfect, yet for all this, hee was condemned and crucified. We on the contrarie part albeit his righteousnes, innocencie, and obedience be onely imputed vnto vs, yet for all that, by meanes of this imputation we are absolued, iustified and discharged of all our sinnes, and of all the accusations that all our enemies can bring against vs.

The 2. parte of the righteousnes of Christ.

The other parte of the righteousnes of Iesus Christ consisteth in the sanctification not only of vs but also of our workes. For although that there is not (as Paule sayeth) any fellowship betweene righteousnesse and vnrighteousnes, betweene light and darknes, betweene the temple of God and Idolls, yet for all this, whē Iesus Christ will ioyne vs with him selfe, and will choose vs and consecrate vs, to the ende to dwell in vs, as in his temple: he sanctifieth vs first by his spirite & prepareth the house where he

2. Cor. 6. 14.

S. Augustin

he will dwell. And because it is ouerstreight to entertaine so great a Lord, he enlargeth it: and whereas it is olde and ruinous, he repaireth it and buildeth it newe againe: wheras it is stinking and full of filthe, he sweepeth and clenseth it. And to be briefe, whereas it is naked, and vnfurnished, he furnisheth and decketh it. And euen as, when he woulde be borne of the Virgin Marie, and before he woulde be lodged in her wombe, he sent his messenger before him, that is to saye, his spirite, to the ende to take it vp for him and to set his marke there: so also when he will be conceaued in our harts, and be borne of vs, he prepareth and regenerateth vs before, sanctifying the place wher he will make his abode.

The sanctification of the faythfull consisteth in 4. pointes.

Nowe this sanctification consisteth in foure pointes. The first is, that we feele and confesse our sinnes, and that we accuse, condemne, and detest our selues before God as miserable and accursed in all pointes. The second is, that we haue a setled zeale and feruent affection to the studie and exercise of good workes, searching out with all diligence, all the meanes & wayes to applie our selues to good: and shunning on the contrarie, all the thinges that maye turne vs away from it. The thirde is, that we fight couragiously against all the desires and concu-

1. *Hatred & detestation of euil.*
2. *A loue & endeuor to good.*
3. *Resistãce against tentations.*

pistēces of our flesh, and that we be strong and resolued against all the other tentations of the deuil and the worlde, whether it be that we are sweetly enticed or flattered thereunto, or violently drawen and inforced. And that wee bee not colde and white lyuered in these combats, but hardie, vigilant, and attentiue to espie and to take all occasions, whereby we maye resiste, and vanquishe all our enemies. The fourth is, that as we continually sinne, so we as often also pray diligently vnto God, that it will please him of his great mercie to pardon our offences And as the people of Israel, goinge through the desertes, had to fight oftētimes against the serpentes, and when they were stong and smitten by them, for to be preserued from the venim and from death, they lifted vp their eyes towarde the brasen serpent that Moises had set vp amiddest their tentes, by sight whereof they were healed: we in like maner fighting against our concupiscences, if it come to passe at anye tyme that they giue vs any blowe, to the ende that this stripe maye not be deadly vnto vs, we must lift vp our eyes towardes Iesus Christ hanging vppon the crosse, and beseech him that he would forgiue vs all our trespasses.

4. Cōtinuall innocation for Gods fauour.

What it is to applie

Now when it is sayd that to shewe our sanctification by the effecte wee must applie our selues

selues to good workes, it maye not bee vnder-
stand that it is enough to exercise our selues in one or in two, leauing the rest behinde: as ma-
ny doe, who doe not take nor vse the worde of God, but in that only where it is agreeable and maye be referred (they thinke) to their appe-
tite: but it is needful to embrace it wholie, and not to thinke that we can doe our dutie in any sort whatsoeuer, vnlesse we enforce our selues to keepe all the commaundementes of God, without omitting the least point or title therof. Euen like as to be healthie in our bodies, it is not enough, not to haue the plague or a pleure-
sie, but generally to be free from all diseases: euen so to be holy in our soules, we must bee cleane from all spottes and defylinges: and we must take the whole lawe of God, as an vniuer-
sall rule of all our thoughts, affections, wordes and deedes, to the ende to keepe it from point to point, and not to omitte any thing which is there commanded vs. And what would it pro-
fite in a citie, diligently to watche at one gate and to keepe it shutte against the enemie, if in meane while all the rest stoode wide open to him? euē so likewise it is to no purpose to kepe our selues from one vice, vnlesse we make ac-
compt, and conscience to abandon our selues from all others: like as amongst archers (as

a mās selfe to good workes.

A similitude.

A similitude.

sayeth Aristotle) there is but one onely marke wherto they must direct their arrowes to shoot well, and yet many meanes to misse and shoote short: so is ther but one onely holines, whereunto we must aspyre, which is a setled desire, fully resolued wholy to obeye God. But there are many kindes of vices & meanes to disobey him, and to withstande his will. We conclude then, that to be applied to good workes, it must not be doone to halues, but perfectly & without exception to take care and endeuour to keepe all that God commaundeth.

Of the perfection of workes.

But here a question must be resolued, and that is: that if to doe our duetie, and to satisfie the will of God, we must be perfect in euery kinde of vertue. And we can not otherwise be Sainctes and Christians, vnlesse we haue in perfection all the pointes of holines. The Philosophers and schoolemen, they say that this is necessarie, and that a man can not bee sayde to be vertuous vnlesse he haue attained to the fulnes and perfection of al vertues: But the scriptures & the auncient fathers they speake otherwise. For S. Paule sayeth, that the minde is accepted according to that it hath: that is to saye, that we are accepted of God when we imploye that portion and measure of power and strength which hee hath giuen vnto vs to the

The opinio of the philosophers & scholemen.

Sentẽces of the scriptures and auncient doctoures.

1. Cor. 8. 12.

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ende to doe wel, and he is contented with that, although we lagge somewhat behinde, and in a great sort of thinges come very shorte of that ende and perfection. which is propounded and set out vnto vs in the lawe. And the selfe same Apostle confesseth, that he had nothinge, but that same onely will: To will is present with me (sayeth he:) but I finde no meane to performe that which is good. Abraham sacrifised his sonne, no otherwise then in effect, & he had nothing but the same will which was imputed vnto him, as if he hadde accomplished all that was commaunded him, So as God him selfe witnesseth of him, sayiug: Forasmuch as thou hast done this thinge, and to obeye me hast not spared thine onely sonne, I will blesse thee and multiplie thy seede, as the starres of heauen. Jesus Christ shal say vnto his elect, which shall be on his right hande in the day of iudgement: Come ye blessed of my father: inherite ye the kingdome prepared for you before the foundation of the worlde. Forasmuche as when I was hungrie ye gaue me meate, &c. This is certaine that among the elect, there was some who being holden in pouertie, or for lacke of abilitie, or by some other let, did not that, which Christ shall say there they did, which thinges themselues cõfesse not to haue done in the same

Rom. 7.18.

Gen. 22.16

Mat. 25.34

place alleaged: And yet for all this, it shalbe sayde vnto all, not because all haue done those things, but because they had a will to doe them Moreouer, if in respecte of vice, the will onely bee enough to conuince and condemne a man, and that he is accounpted and adulterer before the iudgement of God, who hath onely loked on his neighbours wyfe to lust after her: and that he is also reputed a manqueller, that hateth his brother: euen so likewise in respect of good workes we must not doubt but the good will, and desire we haue to performe them is accepted and approued of God though alwayes the effects followe not so soone and so excellent as we desire.

As touching the auncient fathers, they saye
S. Ambrose. the selfe same thinge, S. Ambrose vppon S. Luke, affirmeth that ỹ righteousnes of a Christian man consisteth more in the will then in the worke, and that it ought rather to be measured by the affections then by the effecte. But in the booke which he hath written De fuga mundi, he sayeth it is a hard thing for one to keepe him selfe wholly from vanitie, and that it is impossible altogether to depart from it, otherwise
S. Augustin then in will and desire alone. S. Augustine vppon the first epistle of John sayeth: that the whole life of a Christian is no other thing but

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an holy desire and good will: And in his ninth booke of the Trinitie, he hath a saying seruing to this purpose worthie to be noted: He (sayeth he) that knoweth righteousnesse and loueth it perfectly, that man is righteous, notwithstanding that outwardly he hath not yet shewed by his workes, in any sort, that good affection of his harte. To conclude, looke where and howe often so euer God hath commended vnto vs the studie and keeping of his lawe, he doeth it alwayes in these tearmes: Thou shalt take heede to doe those things which I commaunde thee: To giue vs to vnderstande that the principall pointe that he requiers of vs, is that we haue a desire to please him, and a readie good will to doe that, which he hath commaunded vs according to that grace and strength that he hath giuen vs, which is the thing that he most esteemeth in vs. As wee see a father a great deale more to content him selfe with that his sonne doth, be it neuer so litle, then of all that his seruant can do: because he esteemeth their workes not according to their greatnes, or the payne and time that they haue spēt in doing them: but according to the will and readines which they haue that doe them.

We must then conclude, that the holynes of a Christian man, the duety and diligence which

maketh him to implope those graces that hee hath receaued of God, to prosite in his feare, and continually to better him selfe in the exercise and grouth of good wozkes, are imperfect in many respectes. And as S. Ierome sayeth the perfection of all the righteousnes that is in the flesshe is maimed: & to be perfect it is necessarie that we acknowledge, confesse, and feele with an inwarde feeling, that we are imperfect S. Augustine confirmeth the same, saying: that a righteous mans vertue maye be sayde to be perfect with this condicion, that his perfection consisteth in hauing the knowledge of his imperfection, and in makinge humble confession thereof before God. And howe so euer there be great lacke in vs in this point & that our righteousnesses are as vnperfect beginings in this wozlde: yet neuertheless, we must not thinke that he will reiect and denie them: Foz he is not as other creditours, rigozous and not to be intreated, who will not be contented with him that is bounde before they be payed and satisfied the vttermost farthing: but he is gentle and gracious, and is pleased with vs, when we denie not our debtes, and will not excuse our selues in this, that we are not able to paye: but without all dissimulation oz constrayme, wee frankely and freely confesse, shewing him the

Ieronim.

S. Augustin

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desire we haue to satisfie him, which yet we can not doo (by reason of our pouertie) and therefore humblie beseeche him that he will take in good part that litle we haue, and offering that vnto him, which he hath giuen vs of his owne speciall grace.

When we thus submitte our selues wholly vnto him, and pray him to vse such fauour and gentlenes as shall please him towardes vs, we likewise bearing and shewing such a sincerite and vprightnesse towardes him in the affayres we haue to doe, there is no doubt but he will in like manner take in good part that litle which we present vnto him: and that both we and our workes (howe imperfect so euer they are) shall be accepted and approued of him, in the fauour of his sonne, as if they were perfect, and absolute in euery point. For a father casteth not away his childrē, because they are sicke, crooke backt, blinde, or maymed of hande or foote, or otherwise counterfaict & imperfect: but handleth them more tenderly, & dealeth more softely with them, then with the others, respectinge their debilitie and feblenes. We cast not away wine though it haue lyes or groundes, nor golde howe soeuer it be couered with dirte. A husbande man refuseth not lande, though it be ouer growen with brambles and bryers: but

A similitud shewing that God reiecteth not his childrē though they be imperfect.

will vse the greater diligence to stocke it and to plowe it, hoping with his diligence, that it will bring foorth fruite plentifully: God likewise will not refuse and put vs away, because he seeth manye imperfections and infirmities in vs, naye rather that is an occasion, that he will take the greater pity vppon vs: as Dauid sayeth: Albeit (sayeth S. Ambrose) the light be oftentimes hidden by a cloude, which is caried before the sunne, yet therfore it is not quite put out. And the sunne ceaseth not to bee the sunne, though his beames be stopped, and can not pierce vnto vs: euen so likewise howsoeuer our fayth oftentimes be disfigured, and corrupted by many errors, doubtings and distrustes: it is not therefore quite choked, and we leaue not to be faithfull for these imperfections.

Psal. 103. 13.

S. Ambrose

Two notable questiõs 1. Why God accepteth the imperfect workes of his childrẽ. 2. Why the faithful are not perfectly regenerated in this worlde.

But before I end this matter, it is meete that we yet handle two pointes: one, of which, is the reason, why our holinesse is acceptable vnto God, and the seruice which we doe vnto him, seeing both the one and the other are imperfect: and seeing in his lawe he reiecteth all the sacrifices, which had in them any imperfection at all. The other point is concerning the cause wherefore he regenerating & sanctifyng vs by his holy spirite, hath yet lefte such an heape of vices and imperfections in vs, and so much

much corruption in our nature and lyfe, which notwithstanding all the diligence and labour we can, to correct and mortifie it, yet we can not come any thing neare, to be whollie deliuered and exempte from it. Touching the first of those two pointes, there are two reasons, for which our vertues and workes are approued & accepted before God, howe imperfect so euer they be. One is, because Iesus Christ hath couered and taken them vnder the cloke of his righteousnes, as soone as we are vnited & knit vnto him: so as no such spotte appeareth in vs that can offend God. And for that he is our Mediatour towards God his father, we see God no otherwise then in him and by him: As the father in like manner will not see nor beholde vs otherwher then in Iesus Christ, & through his humanitie as members and partes of his body. And this is the cause that maketh vs to appeare altogether other then we are: For euen like as loking aside through any glasse, be it blew or yelowe or of any other colour, all the things we see, seeme to vs to be of the colour of the glasse, through which we did beholde them So God also beholding and looking vpõ vs in his sonne, we seeme to him to be of his colour, and we haue the apperaunce and brightnes of his innocency and righteousnes: which causeth

An answer to the first question.

Similitudes

that in seeing and touching vs, he thinketh he seeth & toucheth his owne naturall Sonne. As Isaack speaking to Jacob his younger sonne, and feeling his necke and handes, thought it had bene Esau his eldest sonne, The other reason is, that the grace of Gods spirite, beinge mingled with our worckes, our worckes derive & fetch frō thence their greatest dignity, beauty, estimatiō & free strength, as whē we mingle water with wine in a cuppe or in a glasse, that which is taken in there, is called wine, though water be mingled with it: and albeit there bee more water then wine (as it may be) yet that which is the more principall and most precious parte of all beareth the name: euen so the worckes which we doe by the grace of God, be it that they haue a greate many spottes and imperfections, as they proceede from vs, yet for all that, they holde alwayes the name and reputatiō of him, who is they principall auethour.

A similitude.

An answere to the secōd question.

Concerning the second poynte, which is to know the reason why God doth not wholly regenerate and sanctifie vs, from the first houre that he calleth vs to his knowledg, seeing that all his worckes are perfect, and that the lawe requireth of vs, that wee should be holie as he is holy: that is to say, that we should be wholly and perfectly holy. Wee must marke, in verie

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deede, that our regeneration and sanctification are workes of God which are perfect and absolute, as all that he doth is: But this perfection is successiue or by degrees. As we see that it is in many of his creatures. Seede cast into the earth doeth not by and by sproute, encrease and come to his perfection: but by space and length of time, it attaineth to his perfection and ripenesse, in that season that God hath appointed. A tree likewise, is not perfect as soone as it is planted. An infant is not straight wayes vppon the suddaine as soone as it is conceaued in the wombe of his mother, become a man, but with time: euen so we are not all at the first dashe regenerated. But this regeneration riseth by degrees, and being once begonne, then it proceedeth faire and softly by litle and litle encreasing euery daye, till we come to euerlasting life in the heauens. And in that God delighteth so to regenerate and entierly to reforme vs, to make vs altogether newe creatures, he doth it for three great and weightie reasons. First, because he would humble vs, forasmuch as being naturally enclined to presume too much of our selues, we haue great neede that this pride be kept vnder: and that this mischeuous inclination which we haue to such manner of arrogancie shoulde be digged vp and rooted out of our

Similitudes

Three reasons why God differeth to regenerate vs perfectly.

hartes: whiche thinge God doeth after that he hath adopted vs leauinge vs subiect to many miseries and diseases, as well of the bodie as of the minde, to the ende that by this meane we shoulde be barred from lifting vp our selues in any opinion and admiration of our selues, and that we shoulde not speake more biggely and prowdly then we ought: and herein he maketh of a poyson, a remedie and preseruatiue against the poyson that is in our nature: as we see by experience tobe doone in the confectiō of triacle

Similitudes full of great cōsolation.

For euen like as of the flesshe of the viper men make a soueraigne and excellēt remedy against the bytinge of them: euen so God maketh of those infirmities that remaine in vs after our regeneration, and whiche of them selues are deadly and damnable sinnes before him, an healthfull remedie to correcte and represse the other vices & diseases, which are a great deale more pernicious: as is arrogancie and vaine confidence of our selues, contempt and forgetfulnes of God, and such other like pestilences which would kill vs suddainly, if they were not spedely preuented. Which thing our good God doth, who knowing the daunger wherein we are, as a good father is more carefull for our good & saluation then we our selues. By meane whereof, he preuenteth and cutteth of the waye

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that leadeth to the daunger of death (wherein otherwise we are) by these afflictiõs & diseases, which alwayes putteth vs in minde and setteth this medicine before our eyes, driuing vs to search after him & to require aide at his hands. He dealeth with vs, as a iudge in some criminall processe, who will giue an enlargement, but yet with condition, or as they saye with a quousque, that is, till, the time that he calleth it backe, and putteth him in his former estate wherein he was before, if it happen that he fall into any new fault againe. The iudges doe this to keepe them alwayes in feare and diligence, to doe their dutie, and to stoppe them from taking too great libertie. God likewise doeth so with vs, when he will pardon our sinnes and set vs at libertie, leauing vs notwithstanding a great sorte of infirmities and imperfections, which maye alwayes serue him, to charge vs, and for matter to call vs to a reckening, when we would winde out of that bondage, and boast our selues abroade of the goodlynes of our reason and loialtie.

The seconde reason is, because he woulde correct our ingratitude, which is a vice as naturall to vs as presumption. For there is nothing, into which we fall so easely, as into the forgetfulnes of God & of his benefites, which *The.2. reason.*

we haue receaued of him especially when we are at ease and in prosperitie, which maketh vs wanton, and bereueth vs oftentimes of our senses and vnderstanding, which is an other of the most pernicious vices that can be, and prouoketh the heauy wrath and iudgement of God against vs. And this is the cause, why he leaueth vs always in such necessity to the ende he may meete with suche an inconuenience and giue vs occasion to seeke after him. Againe he doeth vs not all the good hee will doe, at one clappe, fearing least that he woulde vtterly abandon and loose it. And herein he doth as a father of an housholde well aduised, who at the first dash dooth not much aduaunce his seruãts: but doth for them by litle and litle, the better alwayes to put them in comfort and hope to receaue aduauntage at laste, to the ende that by this meane they may be holden in seruice, and not departe from his house: euen so, God during the time that we are in this world, giueth vs more hope, then he doeth benefites (and yet it is playne that the graces that he bestoweth vpon vs are infinite) for feare least that if he shoulde make vs great and riche at once, and shoulde giue vs out of hande all the good that he keepeth in store for vs, it woulde make vs to abandon his seruice, as we see sometimes it hap-

A similitude shewing the wisdom of God in gouerning those that be his,

happened to the Iewes by this occasion. As God reproacheth them by his prophet Ieremy: I spake vnto thee when thou waste in prosperitie, but thou saydest, I will not heare: this hath bene thy custome and manner from thy youth, &c. *Iere. 22. 21.*

The thirde reason. The third reason, why God doth not at once defende & fortify vs and that throughout, when he hath regenerated vs, is to the end that those infirmities which yet remaine in vs after our regeneration, shoulde serue to exercise vs, and to keepe vs from slouthfulnes and sleping. For hauing (as S. Ambrose sayeth) a robe or garment which is all to torne and vnsowed, and which for this cause had neede to be amended, we must occupy our selues in repayring and amendinge the same: and must auoide by this meane slouthfulnes and idlenes. Moreouer, being so exercised wee growe more strong and able to fight against the flesh and against all other enemies. Which thing was aunswered to S. Paule (when he desired to be deliuered from that pricke of the flesh that so continually troubled him) that he ought to contente hym selfe with the grace of God which is sufficient: the strength whereof sheweth it selfe more in our infirmities thē in our prosperities. Marke then that our diseases and afflictions stande vs *S. Ambrose* *2. Cor. 12. 9.*

in steed and greatly profite vs, when we suffer and beare them patiently, and we ought to content our selues with the onely will of God that sendeth them, and likewise we must waye that the ende of these imperfections, which he hath yet left in vs after that he hath regenerate vs, is to keepe vs in obedience, & to bridle vs, that we doe not stumble and goe astraye. For euen lyke as to be wyse, it behoueth vs to be fooles
1.Cor.3 18. (as S. Paule sayeth) and to the ende we maye
Iohn.9.41 see more clearely (as Jesus Christ sayeth) to be blinde: euen so that we may be perfecte wee must be imperfect,, and that we haue fowle and dirtie feete, it is to keepe vs occupied in washing them.

The fourth point where the righteousnes of Christ is to be founde.

Hauing nowe handled these two partes of Christes righteousnes, it followeth necessarily to be knowē, what the matter is wherupō this righteousnes worketh, where it resteth and is to be founde eyther in him or in vs, where as the Sorbonicall sophisters say that we can not be otherwise righteous, then by the righteousnes that is in vs: we saye cleane contrary, to witt, that ỹ righteousnes which we must haue to escape the iudgement of God, is not in vs,
2.Cor.5.21. but in Jesus Christ, as S. Paule sayeth, that he was made sinne for vs, that we shoulde be made the righteousnes of God in him. If we will

will therefore rightly vnderſtande, howe his righteouſnes is attributed vnto vs, wee muſt know in what reſpecte our ſinne is attributed vnto him: forasmuch as there is the like reaſon of the one as there is of the other. But it is verie certaine that our ſinnes were neuer effectually in Jeſus Chriſt: who being conceaued by the holy Ghoſt was alwayes holy, innocent cleane, and without ſpotte: but our ſinnes were onely imputed vnto him, to the ende that he ſhoulde beare the punishment of them for vs. *Heb.7.26.* In like manner, his righteouſnes is not eſſentially in vs. For to what degree ſo euer, of holines or vertue we be come vnto in this lyfe, ther is notwithſtãding alwayes in vs a great many of diſordred and vnruly affections: in our vnderſtanding a great many of euill thoughtes, in our mouthes a great many of euill wordes: in our workes a great many of imperfections and indirect dealings: in all our lyfe there is ſo muche corruption and fylthineſſe, that of it ſelfe it is abhominable and ſtincking in the ſight of God. Wherevppon a man may well knowe, that ſuche a righteouſneſſe as that is that was in the ſonne of God, neither dwelleth nor remaineth eſſentially in vs, but onely by imputation: to the ende that thereby we maye receaue the rewarde. And altogether lyke (as

Colloſ. 3. 3. Saint Paule ſayeth) that our lyfe is hidde in him, and muſt not bee reuealed, till the time that hee ſhall appeare in glorie: euen ſo is our righteouſneſſe, the which appeareth not clearely enough, by reaſon of our imperfections, no more then our lyfe doeth by reaſon of our mortalitie and corruption, till the day that God ſhall appeare in iudgement in the perſon of his ſonne.

The righteouſnes of the faythfull cõpared to a robe. Pſal. 132.

This is the reaſon why this righteouſneſſe is cõpared to a robe, according to that which is ſayde in the Pſalme: that the Prieſts ſhoulde be clothed with righteouſneſſe. For as a robe is not borne with vs, and we haue it not from our mothers wombe as we haue our ſkinne: & it is not faſtened to our bodies as the ſkinnes of beaſtes: euen ſo likewiſe neither is the righteouſnes wherewith we are couered, as with a long robe, to the ende that our imperfections may not be perceaued. And this is a great benefite and mercie that God hath wrought & beſtowed vpõ vs, in that he hath not aſſigned it to our ſelues nor put it ouer in our owne handes, but hath prouided a ſtewarde, to whom he hath deliuered it in truſt: forasmuche as we are ſo ill aduiſed, and ſo ill huſbandes, that had we once the ordering of it our ſelues, the deuill by his ſleightes and conueyances woulde ſoone be

beguile vs. For if our forefathers who were so wise & indued with so many excellent graces could not keepe safely that originall righteousnes for so small a time, wherewith they were adorned from the beginning) and were not able to preserue them selues for so litle a while from the crafty fetches and snares of Satan, but that they lost it: what maye happen vnto vs, which are not so wise as they were, if we should haue the keyes and charge of so great and precious treasure, as is the righteousnes of the Sonne of God?

Diuerse similitudes shewing that it is not necessary that Christ his righteousnes shoulde be essentially in vs.

It is a great commoditie and verie good for a tree, that the life and sappe therof lyeth hidde in the roote: For this is the meane to defende, and preserue it from the stormes and frostes of the winter: euen so is it for our profite, that our lyfe and our righteousnes are in Iesus Christ, who is our foundation and roote. For being locked vp in so sure a place, it shalbe preserued and kept for vs against all suche that woulde robbe vs or snatche it awaye from vs by treason or violence. We see that kings and great Lords, they neither meddle nor deale with any money, but they leaue their reuenues in the handes of their treasorers and receauors to dispose of them, contenting themselues when they haue any neede, or other affaires, to be

puruayed and prouided for, of that which is necessary: what need thē is there that we should haue our goods in our owne hands, seeing that we shall lacke nothing, that is needefull for vs? We haue the grace of God, we are his children and consequently his heires: we are enlightened, guided, strengthened, and comforted by his spirite: we are citizens of his kingdome, and seruauntes of his household: to be short, we haue all the profites, rentes and commodities that growe of his righteousnes: what woulde we desire more? Is it not enough that we gather the fruite of a tree, and that it alwayes remayne in his place, and that we carrie it not away with vs? In like manner also we must content our selues to be partakers of the fruites of Christ his righteousnes, albeit it be not essentially in vs: but onely by imputation, & in asmuch as through his onely mercie it is bestowed vpon vs.

Howe we maye be righteous by the righteousnes of an other

But here a doubt may be moued, howe we can be righteous, by the righteousnes of an other, seeing that this is a personall qualitie, which can not be communicated to an other, no more then health, wisedome, strength and beautie. Now can I be otherwise in health, then by the health that resteth effectually in my bodie: how can it be then, that I should be righteous, by

by the righteouſnes, that dwelleth in an other? We muſt aunſwere that this is done by imputation: And as a man maye be acquited of his creditour, by the payement which some shall make of his owne monepe in the name of the debtour: euen so we may be righteous, by the righteouſnes of an other, when he is accepted in our name, as that is of Jeſus Chriſt, when we are vnited and knit to him. All the members of the body without the eye, are altogeather blinde of them selues, and yet notwithſtanding, they ceaſe not euery day to doe their duties rightly. The feete goe without ſtumbling, the handes without offending: in ſuch ſort that ech one of them is led in his worke by the light of the eye which illuminateth & directeth them: and as the ſight of the eye is communicated to all the members of the body, who ſee by it and in it: euen so we in like manner are profited by the righteouſnes of Jeſus Chriſt, which is imparted with vs, as the ſight of the eye with the members, to the end that we may vſe it in the iudgement of God, there to bee acquited and iuſtified, and pronounced alltogeather innocent and diſcharged from all our faultes and offences.

The ſimilitude of the debtor, acquited by another.

The ſimilitude of the members of the body enlightened by the eye.

Now let vs come to the other point, which is, to knowe by what meane we maye obtaine

The firſt point ſhewing by what

meane, wee may appropriate to our selues the righteousnes of Christ Iesus.

this righteousnesse, and appropriate it to our selues. The onely meane is Faith as we may know by many places of the scripture. For S. Paule sayeth that the righteousnes of God is by fayth. Also that righteousnes is reuealed in the Gospell, and communicated by faith. And in another place: being iustified by faith, we haue peace in our conscience. And the Prophet also sayeth: That the righteous man shall liue by faith. And Iesus Christ in the worde whereupon we altogether rest, sayeth: that who so euer beleueth in him, shall not come into iudgement. And to them alwayes that were sicke, and were healed, he sayth commonly, that their faith had saued them, to the end to teach vs that faith is the meane, which is necessarie to obtaine not only righteousnes, but also the adoption of children, the vndeserued fauour, and blessing of our God, and generally all the benefites of Iesus Christ. And altogether like as we apprehende colours by the sight, & soundes by the eare: euen so we apprehende by Fayth Gods promises, in which he offreth life vnto vs and all other his graces. As Ambrose sayeth: Faith is such a vertue and of so great strength, that it obtaineth all that God hath promised vs we beleeuing in him.

Rom. 1. 17.
Rom. 5. 1.
Abac. 2. 4.
Iohn. 3. 5.
Faith is the only meane to fasten vs to Christ, & obtaine his righteousnesse.
S. Ambrose

But when we speake so of Faith, we vnder-

stande

stande not by this name a bare opinion which we may haue of the trueth, or a simple perswasion and consent, whereby we allowe all that is contained in the scripture: but we vnderstande by this Faith a liuely apprehensiō of the truth of Gods promises, and an assuraunce of his grace and fauour in Iesus Christ. Also, a full confidence that is sufficient to beare all the tentations, that can be layde vpon vs, and to beate downe death, the deuill, and all the gates of hell, and further to sette it selfe against wrath, in the iudgement and malediction of God, the which it turneth from vs as a tempest & stormе when we are threatened. Now when we earst sayde that the lawe containeth the promises of God, and in them his vndeserued fauour and grace, as the eye doeth the colour, and the eare the sounde, and the other senses their proper obiect: we vnderstand this of the assuraunce and certainety onely, and not of any carnal feeling. For the thinges that we beleeue, they can not be felt with the hande, nor seene with the eye, nor by any reason, or other sense of man be comprehended, and yet neuertheles they are more certaine, then the thinges that we feele, because our senses maye bee deceaued. As the eye which wil iudge a peece of wood in the water to be crooked, although it be very straight:

What that iustifying Faith is.

But Faith when it is once grounded, & resteth it selfe vpon the worde of God, it is assured of all that is therein taught, and specially it embraceth Iesus Christ and draweth from him euerlasting life.

And albeit that oftentimes, considering the estate & disposition of those matters, it seemeth to vs that all thinges goe quite backewardes, contrarie to that which God hath promised vnto vs: yet notwithstanding in this case we must beleeue, (as S. Paule sayeth) in hope against hope, and in no wise doubt, but his promises shalbe accomplished. For sooner shall heauen earth, and all the worlde perishe, then the least iotte of that which God hath promised vs, and which is proceeded from his mouth, faile to be fully & wholly accomplished in his time. Whē our reason then, or sense will doubte of that which God hath sayde, or vnsay and murmure against it, or any manner of waye distrust his promises, we must resiste and sette our selues manfully with all our might against it, as Abraham did: and staye our selues (as he did) wholly vppon this, that God alway hath both wil, and might to performe whatsoeuer he hath promised

Rom. 4. 18.

And when we come to consider the corruption and vice of our nature, the rebellion of our will

will against the will of God, our infirmities & imperfectiõs, our distrust also that we haue oftentimes of his loue, and other doubts that we make of his prouidẽce, we must not then doubt, but that our faith is mightely assailed, and that we haue to fight wonderfull sharpe and daungerous combattes: but that we maye auoyde them, it is needfull (as in all other tentations) to keepe our selues alwayes to the worde of God, and to make it a buckler against all that the deuill, our reason, and sense can alleage against his will, and those promises that he hath made vnto vs. We must (as S. Augustine sayeth, shutte our eyes from all that wee maye see, and from all considerations that may turne vs away or feare vs: and open our eares, onely to heare and meditate vppon that which God sayeth. and if on the one side considering the things that are present, we perceaue our selues a falling, & readie to be cast headlong into any distrust, we must on ỹ other side for to comforte our selues, beholde Iesus Christ, of whom we are members & sheepe of his pasture, & we must oppose his righteousnes against our vices, his life against our death, his obedience against our rebellion, his fauour & rich grace against our wretchednesse and pouertie, his satisfaction against our debtes, his mercie against our mi-

How we must behaue our selues in tentations.

S. Augustin

serie his strength aginst our weakenes and tẽtations, his merit and intercession, against all the accusations, & informations which the law, our conscience and the deuil him selfe can bring forth and alleage against vs: alwayes thinking that where sinne aboundeth, there grace yet more aboũdeth, & hath farre more strength to saue vs then sinne hath to condemne vs. We must do, as they that go vp into an high tower, who looking downewardes & seeing the depth are afrayde to fall, and that they maye be the more sure they laye holde of the railes: euen so must we alwayes leane vpon the righteousnes and death of Iesus Christ, and strenghthen our selues in that, to the ende we may be preserued from falling downe.

A similitude.

Nowe hauing spoken of the meane wherby a man maye laye holde of the righteousnesse of Christ, and of the equalitie of Faith that apprehendeth the same: it remayneth yet, that we speake of three thinges. The first, whether that for the laying holde vpon that righteousnesse, it be necessarie that Faith be perfecte. Then afterwardes, whether it must be, that it must be cleane from all vices: and lastly whether, it hauing bene once receaued in our harts we can loose it afterwardes, and be depriued of it.

Three questions depending of the former point.

As

As concerning the first poynt, to wit, of the perfection of Fayth it is impossible that euer we cã attaine it: in as much as we are compassed about wᵗ a moztall body, which is so grosse and so slauish, & which fighteth without ceasing against the spirite, when it would lift vp it selfe into any heauẽly meditation: moreouer, hauing such an heape of darknesses and false opinions in our senses & vnderstanding, it is impossible ẏ euer we shoulde haue any perfect knowledge of God, what diligence, paine oꝛ trauell so euer we take to get it: hauing in like manner a hart entangled with so great passions & lusts which driues vs hither and thither, to all vaine affections, in such sozt, that by reason hereof, we can not loue God perfectly & so consequently haue any perfect confidenc in him: becausse confidẽce followeth loue, euen lyke as loue followeth knowledge.

1. To wite, whether faith must be perfecte for the apprehending of Iesus Christ

The knowledge therefoze and confidence that we haue of God being imperfect, which are the two partes of Faith, it followeth herof, that it can not be perfect, & that we haue neede continuallie to begge at Gods hande, that he will augment it in vs, and daye by daye stirre vs vp in the meditation of his pzomises, which is the true meane to nourishe, encrease, and augment Faith. And whereto serue exhoꝛta-

tions, prayers, Sacraments and suche other exercises, if our faith coulde bee perfect here? seeing that all these are not ordained & fostred in the Church, to any other purpose, then to fortifie, & increase the knowledge zeale and affection of the faithfull.

2. Point whether Faith must be cleane from all vices,

Now let vs come to the secõd point. Seing that our Faith is neuer perfect in this worlde, but is alwayes mingled with an infinite number of infirmities which alwayes remayne in vs, in such sort as there is none that can say his harte is cleane from all sinne: and that we haue neede in respect of this, to begge of God in our prayers, that he will pardon vs our offences, and making the confession of our Faith, to say: I beleue the remission of sinnes: Notwithstanding all this that as yet our faith is very weake & defiled with many imperfections, neuertheles it ceaseth not, to laye holde vpon that that it shall please God to bestowe vpon it. No otherwise (for examples sake) thē as a litle child who with his litle handes, or a poore man with his rugged and scabbie handes refuse not to take bread and other almes that a man will bestowe vppon them, as wel as if they were greater & whole. Altogether like as diseases that are vniuersall throughout the whole bodie (as is a burning ague) though they weaken all the partes

A similitude of the force and strength of Faith.

An other similitude

partes of the same and speciallie the stomacke more then all the rest: yet neuertheless hinder not but that it may take a medicine, yea rather the disease is an occasiõ vnto it to prouoke it to take it. euen so also it ought to be so farre of, that the weaknes of our Faith shoulde keepe vs frõ embracing righteousnes and the other benefits of Iesus Christ, that it must prepare & dispose vs to the contrarie: According to which Iesus Christ sayth to the Pharisees who thought thẽ selues to be righteous, ẏ he came not for their sakes, but to call sinners: adding the reason, to wit that they that are sicke haue neede of ẏ phision. And euen like as our diseases and infirmities let not but that our faith, be it neuer so weak, is yet capable of the graces of God, & of all the righteousnes of his sonne: euen so the litlenes of faith making it not lesse capable to be able to apprehend and embrace that righteousnesse: And like as altogether the Apple of the eye which is so litle, and yet, for all that can apprehend the light of the Sunne which is spred ouer all the horizon, yea and the Sunne it selfe which is farre greater, and more ample thẽ all the earth: euen so the eye of faith, albeit that it be very smalle, yet it ceaseth not to lay holde of the Sunne of righteousnes, together with his light, iustice & other giftes, which are as great

Luc. 5. 35.

An other similitude.

and as many in number.

3. Whether the elect cãloose their faith.

But now let vs handle the lacke of the foresayde three pointes, that is to saye: whether Faith being once receaued into our hartes, we can vtterly afterwards loose, and forgoe it. For if hauing once receaued it, we can not be assured to keepe it constantly to the end, we shall alwayes be in doubt of our saluatiõ. But if we be once persuaded and resolued in this point, that hauing bene inspired by ỹ spirit of God in our hartes, it will still there abide, and dwell for euer: this persuasion will alwayes keepe our spirits quiet and contented, and they shall alwayes be ioyfull, yea in the middest of all tentations that may assaile vs. Wherefore it is very necessarie for vs to marke, and diligently to imprint in our mindes, all the places of the holy scripture, in which God hath assured vs of the continuance and perseuerance of his grace and fauour towards vs, and of keeping vs in the faith, and giuing of all the other giftes that he will communicate vpon vs. As in the first place, this testimonie of S. Paule woulde be marked, which sayeth: that Fayth is ioyned with election, and so by consequence founded vpon the counsaile and will of God which is euerlasting & immutable: Then afterwards that place of the Romaines where it is sayde:

Rom. 8.

Rom. 11. 29

That

That the giftes and calling of God are without repentaunce, that is to say, irreuocable, when he hath once gieuen them vnto vs. also ỳ which is sayde in S, Matthew: That to him that hath it shall be giuen. If then, wee haue by Gods grace, Faith and the giftes of the spirite, let vs be certaine that they shall remaine still with vs and looke by the selfe same grace that they were freely bestowed vpon vs, by the same they shall be kept and encreased. Also there is an other place of the Apostle. that all they which were predestinate to lyfe shall afterwarde be called, iustified, and in the ende glorified: If these foure pointes, wherein is contained the whole summe of the saluation of God his children be so chained in order one to the other, by an immutable decree of God: we must cõclude, that as our election is sure, stable & permanent so also are the other effectes that doe necessarily followe it: Also that which S. John sayeth in his first Epistle: that he that is borne of God sinneth not, and the wicked toucheth him not. Also, that goodly protestation that the apostle maketh for him selfe & all the faithfull with so great assuraunce: I am (sayth he) certaine, that there is nether death, nor life, nor Angells, nor principalities, nor powers, nor thinges present, nor thinges to come, nor thinges high, nor

Mat. 13. 12.

Rom. 8. 30.

1. John 5.

Rom. 8. 38.

things low, nor any creature, that shalbe able to separate vs from the loue of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Also, that which Jesus Christ sayeth to his disciples: If any man loue me he will keepe my word, and my father will loue him, and we will come vnto him and dwell with him. Wherupō we may note that he saith not, We will visite him, and so depart againe, as many times we see friendes doe visit one an other: but he sayeth, we will abide with him: which is as much to saye: We will holde our selues to him: and dwell continually with him, without euer departing from him.

Iohn. 14. 23

By all these places, and many more which might be rehersed out of the scripture, it appeareth plainly that fayth being once giuen vs of God, it shall neuer be quite taken away from vs, and so by consequence neither the grace of God, which alwayes followeth it. And although it seeme oftentimes for dead, as it was in Dauid, when he committed so great and hetnous sinnes one after an other: yet for all that, there remayned alwayes in his harte, a certaine remnant of it, which for a time was hidde as fire is vnder the Ashes. And lyke as when it is raked vp it sheweth not his bryghtnes nor heate outwardly, vntill it be vnraked and kindled in a flame: euen so, it oftentimes falleth

falleth out with our faith, which is hidden & couered with many vices, which the most holyest Saintes of God them selues doe many times commit (euen as to fall into diseases) the which continueth, till it plase God to stir vs vp a new by his spirite, & to light vs againe, euen like as when a cãdle is put out. We must iudge thẽ of our fayth, as of a tree, which in winter seemeth to be dead, because it hath no fruite or leaues nor any outward appearaunce of life: and yet notwithstãding it ceaseth not to liue, & sheweth that life, that was hidden within outwardly, in the spring time, bringinge forth flowers and leaues, and taking againe his goodly hewe: in so much as the sappe & strength which kept it selfe enclosed in the roote during the time of the colde, spreadeth it selfe through out all the branches, to make them greene & fresh againe: Euen so likewise is it of Fayth, which seemeth oftentimes to be quite dead in vs, when it bringeth not foorth any sence or feeling neither of God, nor of his promises, nor of his commaundements or threateninges: And sheweth not it selfe by any other wonted effect. Notwithstanding this, it is aliue in vs, and the life of it hath his being in Iesus Christ, in whom it is ẽgrafted & planted. And as the strength of this roote can neither be frosen nor dead: euen so neither

can the Faith of a Christian which is so deepely grounded within be altogether extinguished and dead being the roote of all immortalitie, frō whence it fetcheth his life.

Howe the righteousnes of Iesus Christ maye be distributed to all the faithful

But before we ende this matter, it is needefull to consider one wonderfull thing, to witte, howe the righteousnes of Christ, which is one onely, may be also entierly distributed to euery one of his members without being deuided and sundred in any respect.

A similitude of the soule.

To aunswere this point, a man may say of it, as certaine Philosophers haue sayd of the soule of man, which is wholly throughout ẏ whole body, and in euery part a like: euen so is ẏ righteousnes of Iesus Christ, wholly in the body of the whole church, as the soule, to giue it life and to mainteine it. Then is it altogether, in euery of the particular members, to make thē strong, whole, stout & of courage to doe all their offices and duties. The which thing a man may vnderstande by two similitudes, one is of the voice, which being heard of a great many persons, is in such sort receaued of euery one of thē, prouided that they be attentiue, that the same is wholly vnderstood, without being deuided or sundred in any respecte. The other similitude is of the face which may be receaued in many glasses, and wholly representeth to al, without any diui-

Similitudes of the voice & the face

sion

sion or separation of the same.

Let vs conclude then that a faithful man through faith embraceth the whole righteousnes and all the fruictes of the sacrifice of Iesus Christ: and that, for this cause he can not be condemned or accursed before Gods iudgemēt, no more then his head with whom he is inseparably knitte & vnited. when any man is falne into the water where he is vp euen to the chin, yet cannot be hurt, as lōg as his head is aboue the water, although that all the members and partes of his body be drowned and foundred: so also we cānot be stiffled or hurt in the deapthes of death, seeing that Iesus Christ our head, is alwayes lift vp aboue those deapths, & for that vpon the life and health of him dependes the health and saluation of all his members. *A similitude*

Now it is time to shewe by what signes and markes we may knowe, whether we possesse Iesus Christ, and whether he dwell in vs and we in him. S. Paule sayeth to the Romains: that being iustified by Fayth, we haue peace in our soules: which is an vndoubted token that Christ dwelleth in our hartes, that is to saye: when we feele there tranquillitie and reste, and that we beginne to bee peaceable in our consciences: tormentes, bytings, anguishes, terrors and distruction there ceasing: and when in *Howe we may knowe whether Iesus Christ dwell in vs or no.* *Rom. 5. 1.*

the stead of all these, there cōmeth in place, ioy, pleasure, consolation, and as it were a common feast where all reioyce. For then Iesus Christ liueth in vs and we in him: to witte, when all our thoughtes, our meditations, our workes and our delightes, doe carrie vs to him, as to the marke: And when we sette him out to our selues, to be our onely glorie honour, riches, treasure, and the grounde of all our hopes: and that we holde him as our chiefe and soueraigne good, that is to saye: when we neither knowe, desire, or seeke after any other but him: and that we are enlightened by his light and spirite, are made wyse through his wisdome, and strong through his strength, and riche through his blessings, and righteous through his innocencie, and blessed through his grace and fauour: & whē we will haue no other maister to teache vs, nor other light to leade vs, nor other sight to direct vs, nor other trueth to deliuer vs, nor other life, to quicken vs, nor other king to gouerne and defend vs, nor other mediatour to reconcile vs, and make vs at one with God, nor other aduocate to pleade our cause in his iudgemēt, nor other gate to enter in at to his kingdō, nor to make vs there reioyce of the perfect and full felicitie, which he hath reserued & kept for his elect. And in generall whē we neither seeke

nor

nor will haue other fountaine to quenche our thirst, nor to satisfie our desires. See then how Iesus Christ liueth in vs and we in him.

The perplexities & doubtes that are in the spirituall life of the faythfull.

It is very true that ẏ feeling which we haue of all these things, is not alwayes alike and the same in vs. For asmuch as we are not alwaies a like disposed, at one time as at an other: and we haue not alwayes a like desire to see or to here the word of God, or to read it, or to cõferre with our brethern, which are more aduaunced in the knowledge and zeale of the seruice of God then we are. And likewise the spirit of God doth not touch and stirre vs vp alwayes a like. And this is the cause that in our faith, as in all other qualities, there is sometime more & sometime lesse and that oftentimes it is more strong & liuely, & then somtimes againe more remisse & faint.

A similitude.

For altogether like as we see ẏ water is more hoat or cold, according as it is neare or farre of from the fire: euen so is it with vs, according as we are more or lesse exercised in the word, & driuen by Gods spirit, we haue more or lesse zeale and affection. And altogether like as the disposition of the body followeth the quality and temperature of the aire, elements and exercises, to which we giue our selues: euen so according to the places where we liue, and the nourishment that we there take, is the estate of our soules &

consciences. But be it that water is sometime hoate and sometime colde, and that it chaunge his qualities, sometimes one waye, sometimes an other, yet it is alwayes water: euen so the man that is electe after his regeneration, is alwaies faithful, howsoeuer in that he is the child of Adam: he be sometimes enclined to euil, and that his faith be not alwayes in one and the selfe same estate, and that he is not alwayes accompanied with the like zeale & affection. For often times it commeth to passe that we feele Iesus Christ to stirre and moue himselfe in vs, and by and by after, we haue no maner of feeling at all: but therefore he ceaseth not to dwell in vs, no more then our soules doe dwell in our bodies whē we sleepe, although in sleeping we neither feele thē, nor any of their operations. A woman who hath conceaued and beareth in her wombe a younge childe, feeleth it not alwayes stirre, notwithstanding when she hath felt it once or twise, she doubteth not but she is with childe: euen so it cometh to passe that we haue not a continuall feeling of Iesus Christ, to assure vs that he dwelleth in vs and we in him: but it suffizeth that we haue him when occasion serueth.

There are some also that feele and taste in some sort the righteousnes of Iesus Christ: but on ẏ other side they haue a farre greater feeling of

of their sinnes, which oftentimes maketh them to feare ẏ they are not in God his fauour. Concerning this point we must note, that we more feele that which is euell, thē that which is good For as we see by experience, we feele the calamities & miseries of warre more thē the fruites & pleasures of peace, & the griefes of diseases, more then the quietnes of health, and the hardnes of pouerty, more then the profites and commodities of aboundance and richesse: by reason whereof we ought not much to meruaill, if we feele the stingings and prickes of sinne a great deale more then ẏ cōsolations of the righteousnes of Iesus Christ: seeing ẏ sinne dwelleth in vs & not righteousnes, which thing is in cause ẏ the one is more sensible then ẏ other: Notwithstanding for all this we must not thinke, ẏ sinne is greater & stronger then righteousnes, or that it can in any respect be compared vnto it, or can be more able to condemne and destroy vs, then the righteousnes of Iesus Christ and the grace of God is, to iustifie & saue vs. We haue some times in the toppe of a finger, some paine or greife, which we feele a great deale more then the health that is all ouer the rest of the bodie, yea though it bee muche greater then the paine of our finger. Wherefore we must not esteeme the greatnesse or the strength, whether it be of

A similitude.

righteousnes or sinne, according to that feeling we haue because ꝑ one is alwayes more sensible thē the other: & specially forasmuch as we embrace righteousnesse onely by faith which is of those things that are not outward and sensible.

A remedye against the tentation of the cōtinuall feelinge of our sinne only.

There are other also that feele nothing else but their sinnes: and therfore they liue in continuall feare and distrust, where out they can not winde them selues, hauing no tast at all of the grace & righteousnes of Iesus Christ, nor of any other meane, wherby itis graunted vnto vs. Which thing (of a trueth) is very daungerous: & they which feele thē selues in such case ought earnestly to pray vnto God, that it will please him to quickē them vp, & to warme thē through his spirite. And on their part it behoueth that they giue them selues oftentimes to read & to meditate vpon his promises, and that they frequēt the Church, & heare exhortations with the greatest attention they can, forasmuch as faith is engēdred by hearing. And although it come to passe ꝑ they do all these things without any great affection, yet must they not therefore thinke that they are altogether vnprofitable vnto them, no more then a man that taketh breade and meate when he taketh and eateth it without any great appetite. For although that he haue not such a pleasure in eating, as if he

A similitude shewing that we must not be discouraged though we find not alwayes in

were

were well an hungred: notwithstanding, that which he receaueth, ceaseth not to profit and sustaine him, as we see in sickenesse: euen so doe prayers and other Christian exercises, to which such cold persons do giue themselues. And how soeuer they make thē without any great zeale yet for all that they cease not to profit thē. And in euery thing ẏ commeth to passe, howesoeuer it be that they feele their sinnes, they declare thereby that they are not altogether dead, nor vtterly depriued of life, and that therefore it only remayneth for thē to search the meanes how to encourage themselues, and to doe euen as a man would do to fire, when it is out, which whē he will kindle againe, he blowreth it, or to a lāpe to which a man putteth oyle when the light is going out.

ourselues that good desire and taste that we ought to haue of the word of God.

There are other some which neither haue feeling of righteousnes nor of their sinnes, and these are altogether blockish, not thinking any whit of their safety, nor regarding to harkē vnto any thing that is spoken, taught or shewed to them for their helpe & recouerie. Such diseases are very daungerous as are to mans body Apoplexies, the falling sickenes, Palseyes and such other which are altogether cold, killing the naturall heate, & choking all ẏ senses. All that we can doe for these, is to praye vnto God to heale

A remedie against the spirituall blockishnes or lacke of feeling. Apoplexia is a disease engendred of cold humours, that taketh away.

a mannes senses and feelinge.

thē, as he did the man sicke of the Palsey, & that he will restore to them ỳ vse of their senses, that they may feele as wel the burden and waight of their sinnes, as also the consolation of his grace

The last point is of the effectes of this righteousnes in vs after regeneration & that cōtayneth 4. partes.

The last point, that we haue to entreate of is of the effectes, that this righteousnes bringeth forth in vs after our regeneration: wherof there are foure principall partes.

The first is of the mortification of the flesh. The second of the confessiō of Fayth, The third of prayers, and the last of charitie.

1. The mortification of the flesh.

Mortification of the flesh consisteth in this that we suffer not sinne to raigne in vs: but couragiously fight against all the concupiscences thereof, obeying the spirite of the lawe of God and groning continuallie vnder the burden of our infirmities, crying to God without ceasing, that in this case he will make an ende, and prouid efor vs.

2. The confession of Fayth.

Confession consisteth in this, that we publish the meanes of our saluation, and that we witnes it openly and euidently by our workes & words, at all times when occasion is offered vnto vs: without being hindred through the feare of any daunger whatsoeuer.

3. Prayers.

As concerning prayers, it is necessary that eueninge and morning, before and after meate, and in the beginninge and endinge of all our workes

workes, we pray vnto God and praise him, beg ging that in our prayers which he hath com maunded vs to aske, and promised to giue vnto vs, with ful Faith & assurance to obtaine them which we must grounde vpon his grace and pro mises, and vpon the merite and intercession of Iesus Christ our alone Mediatour

As touching loue, first of all it is required 4. *Charitie.* the we loue God with all our hearte, with all our strengh, and with all our vnderstandinge, and then our neighbour as our selfe, the which loue of our neighbour ẏ it may be right, it must be referred to that loue of God in such wise that it be the rule and measure thereof, and likewise of all other our affections,

Nowe in obseruing of these foure pointes, we must first take heede that we be not dull and slouthfull to do our indeuour therin. The which thing that we may auoyde, we must seeke out whith all diligence euery occasion to applie our selues thereto, and take heede to auoyde those thinges which maye turne vs awaye from it. Then afterwardes we must beware that in no wise we distrust the grace of God, nor the ser uice that we offer vp vnto him, but that we be certainly perswaded, that we together with our workes, shalbe acceptable vnto him, through grace, that hauing this perswasion we may goe

faithfully & chearefully forward in our vocatiō

We must auoide presumptiō & opinion of our selues

And finally, that we take good heede to our selues, that aboue al things we be not presumptuous. And to the ende to keepe vs from it, it is not enough, ỳ we haue no opinion of our selues nor of our workes: but as it is written in the

Psal. 131.1

Psalme: we must not desire any thing that is to high for vs, but be content with that portion & measure of grace, that it hath pleased God to bestow vpon vs, and we must applie our selues according to that power & meane that he hath gieuen vs: As S Peter sayeth: Let euery man

1. Pet. 4.10

as he hath receaued the gift, minister the same one to an other as a good husband and steward of the graces and giftes of God. For if we haue receaued but two talents, and will make as greate traffique with thē, as he that hath receaued fiue, this is a presumptiō before God, who hath measured out and proportioned his giftes to our capacitie, and requireth of profites and gaines according to ỳ quantitie of those graces and giftes which he hath bestowed vpon vs.

The second iudgemente where we must aunswere concerning our righteousnes.

We haue sayd in the beginning that the second iudgement whereto we must answere concerning our righteousnesse, is that of the lawe. which is no other thing then the seate of Gods righteousnesse, to which it is impossible for vs of our selues to satisfie, and we haue neither

workes,

workes, thaughts, words, nor affectiõs but they are to be cõdemned of God, if proceſſe be made out there for vs, and we be to be iudged in this court: as S. Paule ſaith that all they which are vnder the law, are vnder the curſe: & in an other place, he calleth the law the miniſter of Death. And Dauid ſpeaking to God ſayth: Enter not into iudgement with thy ſeruant: For no man liuing ſhalbe iuſtified in thy ſight: Alſo in an other place he ſayeth: O Lord if thou looke vpon our iniquities, who ſhall ſtand in thy iudgemẽt? Forasmuch as this iudgmẽt is ſo entier, where all things are examined, in ſuch ſort, from point to point, that the brightneſſe and light of the moone and ſtarres, the righteouſnes and innocencie of the Angells, ſhall hardly eſcape from being reiected and cenſured, as Iob ſayth. How then ſhall we be able to aunſwere there, & what meanes ſhall we alleage for our iuſtificatiõ, ỳ we may eſcape? S. Paule ſaith, They that haue ſinned without the law, ſhall periſh without the lawe. But ſeeing that they ſhall be condemned by the law, who haue tranſgreſſed it: what ſhall we do then? we can aunſwere and alleage many thinges for our defence.

Gal. 3. 10. 2. Cor. 3. 7. Pſal. 143. 2 Pſal. 130. 3 Iob. 25. 5. Iob, 4. 18. Rom. 2. 12.

The waye howe to be deliuered from the

First we can auoyde this iudgement and ridde our ſelues from it demaunding to be ſent before the throne of Gods mercie: forasmuche

iudgement and malediction of the lawe. Gala.4.7. Iohn.5. 22. Iames.1.13

as being free and deliuered, we are not any longer vnder the lawe, but vnder grace: so as Moises is not nowe any more our Iudge but Iesus Christ: to whom the father hath giuen auctoritie and iudgement. Moreouer mercie (as S. Iames sayth) is aboue righteousnes: which is as an inferiour & lower courte, from which we may appeale to that high & great court of God his mercie: wherein Iesus Christ is set downe and keepeth ỳ highest place as chefe president And as it is he that is our aduocate, so we are assured that he wil giue vs a discharge in our fauour. Wherfore if the law, Moises & the righteousnes of God doe condemne vs, we must not therefore be affraide: forasmuch as this is such a simple sentence, as we maye at all times appeale from it. To conclude the lawe is as a receauer, which taketh accompt of our debtes, which is so hard & rigorous, that by no intreatie it wil remit and pardon any thing of that we owe, and will make vs to paie to the vttermost farthing: But the Lorde is he that stayeth and closeth vp the count, to wit Iesus Christ, being (contrary to the lawe) good, gracious and liberall, entreating vs with all gentlenes, neither demaunding any thing of vs but that which we be able to paie, & furnishing vs him selfe with that which we lacke, & acquiting vs of his mere

liberalitie

liberalitie of the ouerplus, so that presently it may be supplied in him.

Furthermore wee maye yet alleage in this iudgement, that the lawe can not make our processe: but Iesus Christ, and the mercie of God be our assessours, who moderate iudgement in such sort, that not onely it can not bee hurtfull vnto vs, but very healthfull for vs. As the iudgement of the woman taken in adulterie, the figure thereof: who being threatened before Iesus Christ, by the Pharisees, who maintayned that by the lawe of Moises she ought to be stoned to death: was notwithstanding all that they coulde alleage, sent awaye by Iesus Christ, without her accusers, or any others that were in their companie, once interpriling to hurt her in any sorte what so euer Onely Iesus Christ sayeth vnto her, that hense forwarde she must take heede that she sinned no more: and so that condemnation which the ministers of the lawe had pronounced against her was by Christ, turned into a simple admonition and instruction. A thing that ought well to be marked, to the end we may vnderstande what ought nowe a dayes to be the true vse of the lawe to wards the faithful: which condemneth them no more to death as it was wont, but teacheth and instructeth them of their dutie, ex-

Iohn.8.3.

An allegorie of our exemption from the iudgement of the lawe by Iesus Christ.

The vse of the lawe towardes the faithfull.

hoyteth them to that, and reproueth, and procureth, by all meanes so to directe, and bring them on, as they may be sufficiently enabled to goe to the schoole of Jesus Christ:

A comparison & difference of the law and the Gospell.

The lawe and Jesus Christ in like manner are as a Phisition and Surgeon, comming to a sicke man to heale him. The surgeō openeth the veine, and taketh away bloud from him, not to the end to make him to die, but as a remedy, appointed for the recouery of his health & safetie. The law also pearceth our impostume, & sometimes maketh a great hole in it: but neither to the ende to kil vs, nor to hurt vs: but to bring vs into a good order, to the end we may be ỹ more easely healed. Those sentences thē, that the law pronounceth against vs, they are profitable for vs, forasmuch as they awaken vs and make vs to looke to our selues and to our affaires, and to be more diligent to search out ỹ meanes whereby to bring vs into good order.

The thirde meane, or defence against the iudgemente of the lawe.

Mat. 5.17.

Rom. 10.4.

The last bulwarke that we canne set against the iudgement of the lawe, is that Jesus Christ hath fulfilled the same for vs, as he him selfe witnesseth: that he came not to abolish the law, but to fulfil it. Which thing S. Paule also confirmeth saying: that Christ is the accomplishment of the lawe in righteousnesse to all beleeuers. Wherefore we be not, in any wise subiect

to

to death, nor to the curse, that the lawe hath pronounced against them, that haue transgressed it, seeing wee are the members of Iesus Christ, and that we haue kept and fulfilled it in him. And as in Adam we were made sinners through disobedience: euen so being incorporated into Iesus Christ, we are righteous through his obedience, and so consequently exempte from the iurisdiction and power of the lawe: which can not exercise the auctoritie it hath to condemne vs, but against thē that transgresse and are rebellious against it. Whē therfore we endeuour our selues, to doe our dutie, to mortifie through his spirite the workes of the flesh, there is not any condemnation to vs, nor to all them that are in Iesus Christ, who are by a liuely faith vnited to him, ingrafted and incorporated into his righteousnes. Rom. 8 1.

The third kinde of iudgement whereof wee spake in the beginning of our diuision is the iudgement of men: which commonly is more corrupt and vniuste, by reason of their ignorance & false opinions, which they conceaue & frame in their owne vnderstanding: and likewise because of their passiōs and desires, which often times driue and carry them headlong contrary to their will. Wherfore we must not trouble our selues much to satisfie that, especially in *The thirde iudgemente against vs, to witte, the iudgement of men, and of the remedies of the same.*

matters that appertaine to religion and conscience. As in the doctrine of saluation, which we must not take from any other, but from the spirite of God, nor search for any where else but in the lawe and the Gospell: where all is taught by the writings of the Prophetes and Apostles. Wherefore there is no other rule of our Faith and obedience, but the onely will of God, that is to saye, we ought not to beleeue any thing, as concerning our saluation, but that which he hath promised in his holy Gospell, nor doe any thing for his seruice, but that which he hath commaunded and ordeyned in his lawe. And when so euer it be found, that men will be so rashe either to adde, or to diminishe, or to alter any thing in the worde of God there a man maye iudge, and surely perswade him selfe of suche, that they are false teachers and Prophets: and so likewise of them that beleeue & submit them selues vnto such by whom they are abused and deceaued. This is the reason why S. Paule saieth, that if he woulde please men, he shoulde not be the seruaunt of Iesus Christ. And in an other place: If an Angell from heauen shoulde teache any other Gospell then that Iesus Christ and his Apostles haue published, that he woulde accompt him accursed. It is therefore needefull to be taught

Our faith must not depend vpon others.

Gal. 1.8.10

taught that in these thinges, belonging to ỳ honour & seruice of God, and to the saluation and rest of our soules, we rest our selues altogether vpon the scripture, and thereto bende our selues as to the onely marke, that we neither haste too much forward, nor lagge to much behinde. And further that we hang not vpon the iudgement of men, as whereby we maye either be iustified or condemned.

Sainct Paule writing to the Corinthians sayeth: I passe litle to be iudged of you, or of the iudgement of men, no I iudge not my owne selfe: forasmuch as I knowe my selfe not to be culpable in any thing, yet am I not thereby iustified: but he that iudgeth me is the Lorde. Therefore iudge not before the time, before the Lorde come, who will bring all thinges to light, manifesting the thinges that are hidde and all the counsailes & affections of the harte: then shall euery one be praysed of God. Hereby he woulde teach vs not much to esteeme the iudgement of men be it in good or euill, because they are vaine of their owne nature, and if they praise vs, this ought not to puffe vs vp, or to encrease the opinion wee haue of our selues. Also if they dispraise or condemne vs we ought not therein to discourage our selues hauing the spirite of God, his worde and our owne con- 1. Cor. 4. 3 4. &c.

science, to sustaine and iustifie vs.

We are at this day excommunicated of the Pope, and condemned and reiected from his presence and of the most part of men: and principally of them, who are in greatest estimation and credit of knowledge and wisedom, notwithstanding concerning the Pope, we ought to make no reckoning of him nor of all ỳ sentences that he can pronounce and thunder out against vs. For he is the enemie of Iesus Christ, and consequently Antichrist: and an enemie of the light forasmuch as all his workes are euill: and of the trueth, being the first Embassadour and minister of lying: and to conclude, an vtter enemy to the saluation of men, and of the honour of God. Also he is the sonne of perdition, to cast awaye and to destroye all those, which will depende on his authoritie, and wilbe brought to his opinion touching the estate and saluation of their conscience. Is not this he which beareth
Apoc. 13. 1. the name of blasphemie vppon his forhead, to shewe that he woulde be the protectour? It is not therfore to be maruailed at, if he condemne and holde those for heritiques, which loue the honour of God, and employ themselues to aduaunce the kingdome of Iesus Christ.

As concerning the great and wise men of this world we ought not also to discourage our selues

selues, if they sette them selues with all their strength against the truth, wherof they haue no knowledge as Iesus Christ sayeth: that his father hath hidde from the great and wise of the worlde, the misteries of the kingdome of heauen, and hath reuealed them to litle ones. *Mat.11.25*
According to which S. Paule sayeth: that he preached Iesus Christ crucified, which was an offence to the Iewes, and foolishnesse to the Grecians: alleaging that which is written in Esay: I will destroy the wisdome of the wise, and will caste awaye the vnderstanding of the prudente. *1.Cor.1.23* *Isay.29.14*
And adioyning that same question. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this worlde? Hath not God made the wisdome of this worlde foolishnesse? Ieremy sayeth also, seeing the people to make no accounpt of his worde: I will get me vnto the great men, and will speake vnto them. For they haue knowen the way of the Lorde, which the people knowe not. But these also haue broken the yoke, and haue banded them selues together to speake against the worde of God, as the others. All these places serue to shewe vnto vs, that God hath chosen the foolishe thinges of the worlde, to confounde the wise. And hereof it is, that we see nowe a dayes that the greatest men and they that are of most reputation in the *Iere.5.5.*

worlde, doe most obstinatly resist the trueth: & shewe by worde and effectes, that they are most blind in God his matters, taking darkenes for light, sower for sweete, and sweete for sower.

Now as the greatnes and authority of men ought not to astonishe vs, nor any whit to moue vs, so also, neither the number and multitude of them. For asmuch as the way that leadeth to destruction is broade, & is chosen of the greatest number of persons who enter there, and goe on in it because that men are naturally enclined to embrace errours and lies. and there is none but the elect of God, which beleue & loue ý trueth: who are a litle number (as Iesus Christ sayth) in respect of the reprobate.

Mat. 7. 13.

We conclude then, that to the end we be righteous it is not needfull that we satisfie men, nor conforme our selues to their iudgement in matters that concerne the honour and seruice of almightie God, and the estate of the conscience: wherin oftētimes they erre, because they leaue the worde of God which is the only way whereby a man may wel and rightly iudge and define of these two poincts, and betake them selues to the iudgement and definition of their owne opinions and phantasies, which are for the most part fond and ridiculous.

There are two thinges in which we may ap

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ply our selues to mans iudgemẽt, that is to say; to thinges meerely ciuill and politique, and to thinges indifferent. For it must not be þ a faithfull man be partiall in pollicie, neither that he violate the publique peace, as long as he may kepe and maintaine it without offence to God, or trouble to the quiet of his conscience. But it behoueth that he obeye the ordinaunces of the Magistrate, and keepe the statutes, lawes & customes of the countrey where he dwelleth, carefully watching that he giue none occasion of offence, nor suspition that he will innouate or alter any thing in the estate and pollycie of the common wealth.

Of the vse of ciuil and politique thinges.

As concerning thinges indifferent, we must follow the counsel of S. Augustine writing to Ianuarius: that when the thynge that is commaunded of men is not contrary to Faith, nor to good customes, we must hold them for indifferent, & not gaine stande in any thyng whatsoeuer sto the ende to keepe peace with those with whom we are conuersant. For which cause Uictor Bishop of Rome was sharply reproued by Ireneus & other auncient fathers; because that for þ diuersity of ceremonies, which they kept in the celebration of Easter, he had separated his Church from the Communion of the East churches. The which thing was attributed vn-

Of the vse of thinges indifferent. S. Augustin.

to him for great presumption and arrogancie, that he would go about to subiect all Churches to the Customes and ceremonies which were obserued in his: and for hauing renounced the common confederation, in which he ought to haue abidden united and faste knitte, and not to haue broken the chaine of charity, which ought to haue locked together alike all the members of the vniuersall Church.

The fourth and laste iudgement. which is that of the conscience.

The last iudgement to which we must aunswere, is that of our conscience, which either ministreth vnto vs great consolations, or else great torments, according as it is either euill or wel disposed. For we may saye that a pure conscience, is a paradise which we maye haue in this worlde: forasmuch as there is not any thing which can bring vs greater peace & contentment, bee it in prosperitie or in aduersitie. Euen like as ỹ body when it is in good health, is strong and able to beare the great stormes & colde of winter, and likewise the excessiue and vntemperate heat of the sommer: euen so a conscience that is whole, & fully resolued, can beare stoutly all accidents, without yelding or shrinking vnder the burden and waight of any thing whatsoeuer may happen vnto it. Contrariwise an euill and sicke conscience is a very hell, and there is nothing in ỹ world that may more vexe

A good conscience is a paradise in this worlde.

A similitude.

An euill conscience a hell.

and

and torment vs. And as a good conscience is as suger to sweeten and mollify all our affections: euen so ỹ other is as sharpe vinegre, which sowreth & troubleth all our ioyes and consolations: And moreouer as the one is sufficient to resiste al tentations: euen so the other is soft, cowardly & vanquished as soone as it is assailed. It is necessary therefore that as we are curious in looking to the health of our bodies, obseruing for that purpose, the dyet and gouernment that is deliuered & appointed by the phisition vnto vs, & contrariwise abstaining from all those meats, & excesse which may offende & alter our health: euen so that we haue the same desire and care to preserue that health for our soules, marking diligently all the rules and ordinaunces of good life, which God the most high and soueraigne phisition hath appointed vs, and taking heede on the other side, to auoide & shunne that which he hath prohibited and forbidden vs.

Let vs consider a litle, what great pleasure and ioye a man may haue, who returning home after a lōg iourney into his owne house, findeth there his wife, who commeth to take him about the necke, and embraceth him, kissing and making much of him: doth not this make him by and by to forget all hys trauayle which he hath endured in his iourney? As contrariwise, if he

should find his wife after his returne brauling, riotous, froward, & who in stead of comforting him, would all maner of wayes vexe & torment him, woulde not this encrease and double his paines and torments which he hath suffered by the way: Euen such is ỳ estate of the conscience Although that our enemies commit a thousand outrages, violencies & villanies against vs. If we returning from our selues, and entring into our owne conscięce, find there one with a cheerfull & merrie countenance, which doth comfort & content vs, it maketh vs in a moment to forget all our enemies. But on the other side, if it be naught, it wearieth vs in such sort, that we shal not find any house worse thē our owne, nor any place where we may worse quiet our selues then with our selues. Isay sayeth: that an euill conscience is as a streight bed, in which a man can not stretche him selfe, nor turne him selfe at pleasure. It is a hard thing for a man there to sleepe well and to rest quietly: Likewise a man which hath a festred cōscience, he can not finde any place or condition to content him, & which is not altogether too streight for him. This is the cause ỳ Dauid so often prayeth to God that he will set his imprisoned hart at large, that is to say, that he wil shew him this fauour, that he may alwaies haue a sound & vpright cōscience.

Isai. 28.20.

A similitude

Psal. 4.2.

Nowe

Nowe to the end we may haue such a conscience, it behoueth that it be wel founded: & that it may be wel founded, it is requisite that ỳ only word of God be the foundation thereof: so as we make no conscience, but to do those things that God hath forbidden, and to leaue vndone those thinges that he hath comaunded. Forasmuch as he that wil stretch out his conscience beyond this, knoweth not how to saue himselfe, but ỳ ranging beyond the boundes of Gods word, he must haue infinit scruples, which shal vexe him continually. And to be short, there is nothing in the world more pernicious, nor more to be feared, then to confound the conscience about such imaginations, or about the commaundements and traditions of men.

The way to haue a good conscience.

But here must be noted that the conscięce & the peace of conscience are things diuers, & ỳ they haue diuers foundations. For the conscience (as hath ben already declared) is ruled by the law, that is to say by ỳ commaundements & forbiddings of God. But ỳ peace of conscience hath for his foundatiõ the Gospel, ỳ promises, the grace of Iesus Christ & his righteousnesse. And as there is no other meane to answere to ỳ iudgement of God, but ỳ righteousnesse & innocęcy of Iesus Christ: euẽ so is it he alone which can stãd vs in stead to satisfie ỳ iudgemẽt of our

A differẽce betwixt the conscience and the peace of conscience

Iesus Christ onely hath satisfied the iudgement of our conscience.

consciences. For if we looke vnto our workes we haue our consciences straight way vexed & disquieted with feare and distrust of not hauing dõe our duety, in not obeying God, nor keping of his commaundements, as we were bounde: which was the cause that S. Paule sayde, that he felt him selfe not culpable of any thing, but yet for this, he thought him selfe not iustified: to geue vs to vnderstand: that there is nothing that can pacifie our cõscience, but the only righteousnes of Jesus Christ, & not our owne, which is alwayes imperfect and defiled w̃ many filths of our concupiscence, & by reason hereof cannot content our heart, nor make vs to take any pleasure in many of those things we haue done or lefte vndone: but ẏ bloud, woundes, & death, and the side of Jesus Christ opened (as S. Bernard saith) is that, which pacifieth ẏ conscience, whẽ as it would thus tormẽt & persecute vs: Behold the freedome & refuge we haue, where we may retire to safety. To conclude then and heare to make an end of this treatise, the righteousnes of Jesus Christ, is the onely meane whereby we are iustified before the iudgment of God, of the law, of men, & of the conscience.

1. Cor. 4. 4.

FINIS.

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